A COMPETITION WITH A PRIZE FOR EVERYONE.

S.S. PEARSON'S 100,000 PRIZES COUPON. June 3rd, 1899. No. 4. S.S.

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 544. FOR WEEK ENDING JUNE 3RD, 1899. [ONE PENNY.

Mrs. PARTINGTON

and her mop have made sport for many a long year. Tradition says she one day tried to sweep back the waves of the Atlantic with her mop. Mrs. Partington had sense enough to retire before the advancing waves, shouldering her mop withal. But it was very foolish of the old lady. She attempted the impossible. To-day we not only attempt but accomplish what often appears an impossibility—to restore wrecked health! It seems hopeless to expect a cure, and yet Page Woodcock's Wind Pills have proved invaluable for the cure of Indigestion, Wind on the Stomach, Liver Complaints, Biliousness, Sick Headache, Costiveness, Palpitation of the Heart, etc.

Mr. Richard Kirk, Everton Mill, Bawtry, says: "I thank you for the great benefit I have obtained through taking your Wind Pills. Three years ago I had a bad attack of Influenza, which left me seriously ill; my face and hands used to swell; I was short of breath, pains in my Back and Chest, was also troubled with a bad cough. I was recommended to try your Wind Pills, and they have done me more good than I can describe. You may publish my name and address."

Page Woodcock's Wind Pills being purely Vegetable, Tasteless, and Mild and Tonic in their action, may be taken with perfect safety by the most delicate.

All sufferers from Indigestion, Liver Complaints, Wind on the Stomach, Sick Headache, Nervous Debility, Costiveness, should avail themselves of this most excellent Medicine.

Page Woodcock's Wind Pills are sold by all Medicine Vendors at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d.; post free for price by Page Woodcock, Lincoln.

10/6 BUY DIRECT FROM Allen Foster & Co SOLE MAKERS OF THE 'ALFOSCO' COSTUMES BY PARCEL POST. 10/6

A Bargain in Costume Skirts. Made in a good Black and Navy Serge lined throughout, price only 3/11, carriage 5d. extra.

Design No. 97.

10/6

Design No. 97. 10/6. Patterns & Sketches post free.

Design No. 97.—Half a Guinea.—Design No. 97 is the smart and fashionable Cheviotterfield Coat and Skirt. It consists of a tailor-made single-breasted coat, with velvet collar, and full, well-made skirt. This smart Costume is made in the smooth-faced Venetian Cloth or in the famous Specialite Serge for Half a Guinea Costume complete. Carriage paid, 6d. extra. The Skirt alone can be had at 5/6; carriage, 5d. Colours in either cloth are: Black, Navy, Electric, Blue-Grey, Myrtle, Brown, Fawn, Bronze-Green, Moss, Dark Grey, Purple. When ordering, please give measurement round bust (under arms), length of sleeve inside, size of waist, and length of Skirt in front.

Design No. 94.

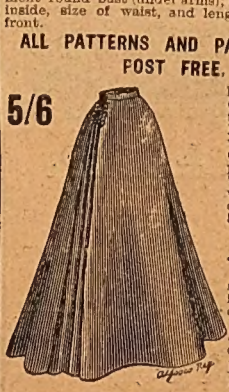
10/6 Carriage Paid 6d. extra.

Design No. 94. HALF A GUINEA.

Design No. 94 is a truly marvellous creation as a Costume. It stands unrivalled in point of value, style, and appearance—acknowledged everywhere the best Half-Guinea Costume of the Season. It is produced in the excellent Venetian Cloth or in the Specialite Serge—two grand cloths, unsurpassed for wear and durability. It is a velvet trimmed Costume with bodice and sleeves lined. It has a pretty pleated front and fits tight to the figure. The skirt is cut full and well-made. Truly marvellous value, and only Half a Guinea. Costume complete. Carriage paid, 6d. extra; or Skirt alone, 5/6; carriage 5d. extra.

ALL PATTERNS AND PARTICULARS POST FREE.

5/6



Design No. 137. 5/6.

THE COSTUME SKIRT OF THE SEASON, and the latest design. Tailor-cut skirt, plenty of fulness, with inverted pleats at back, laced up with cord at top in the latest fashion, as shown in sketch. Made in two grand cloths, the Specialite Serge and the Venetian Cloth. Price only 5/6, carriage 5d. extra. Satisfaction guaranteed.

Ladies can call and inspect our goods at our Show Rooms, 17 Roscoe St., Golden Lane, E.C.

Business Hours, 9 to 6. Saturdays, 9 to 1.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

The London Manufacturers,

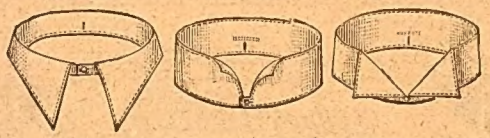
17 ROSCOE STREET, GOLDEN LANE, LONDON, E.C.

THOMPSON BROS.' GREAT GIFT

AVAILABLE UNTIL FRIDAY, JUNE 30th, ONLY.

You BUY a pair of TROUSERS at 7s. 6d., we GIVE YOU a Box of SIX COLLARS, worth 3s. 6d.
You BUY a SUIT at 27s. 6d. or 32s. 6d., and we GIVE YOU Two Boxes of COLLARS, each containing Six, worth 7s.

"BENBOW." 2½ by 2½. "NEW VICEROY." 2⅝ by 2⅝. "GARRISON." 2¾ by 2¾.



"CLYDE." "MUNSTER." 2⅜ by 2. "MENTONE." 2¼ by 2.

To every purchaser of a pair of our famous 7s. 6d. TROUSERS to measure, in all the newest shades and cloths, West-end fit, cut, and style guaranteed, we will present absolutely free of further cost, a box of six of our famous West-end linen Collars (four), any shape (as above), and to every purchaser of one of our famous West-end Suits at 27s. 6d. to measure, in all the new and fashionable cloths and shades, also in the new green and brown shades, now quite the season's rage, or one of our world-famed Blue and Black Serge Suits (guaranteed to stand sun and sea) at 32s. 6d. to measure, we will present two boxes of any of the above collars.

INSTRUCTIONS.—Country residents and those unable to call must write for patterns and self-measurement rules, sent post free to any address (the patterns need not be returned). They can then select their patterns, measure themselves, and send 7s. 6d. P.O., together with 6d. in stamps for postage, when they will receive Trousers and Collars as required. If Suit is required, send 27s. 6d. or 32s. 6d., together with 1s. extra for postage. State size of neck and shape required. This offer is absolutely bona fide. Those able to call and be measured will, of course, receive the same advantages.

S. T. THOMPSON BROS., Tailors, Ltd., 3 OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W. (Corner Charing Cross Road).

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

INVESTED FUNDS £10,000,000.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.
FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

FOR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE. BEAUTIFUL HAIR.

IMPERIAL HAIR DYES &c.

ONE LIQUID.

No. 1. Black.
No. 2. Dark Brown.
No. 3. Light Brown.
No. 4. Golden Brown or Auburn.
No. 5. Pure Golden.
No. 6. Imperial Hair Grower.

Harmless, Perfect, Permanent, and Odourless. A Medical Certificate with each bottle.

2/6, 3/6, 5/-, AND 10/6.

(PRIVATELY PACKED.)

J. BRODIE,
41 MUSEUM STREET, LONDON.
Established 1868. Once tried, always used.

"THEY LOOK SMART AND YIELD LOYAL SERVICE."

THE John Noble HALF-GUINEA COSTUMES

Promptly sent by Parcel Post, direct from the **Largest Firm of Costumiers and Mantlemen in the World.**

Three Gold Medals awarded to JOHN NOBLE, LTD., the originators of Half-Guinea Costumes, whose Advertisements many persons imitate, but whose Costumes no firm has seriously endeavoured to equal.

PATTERNS SENT POST FREE

to all who name *Short Stories* of the two good dress cloths in which these Costumes are chiefly supplied.

I. John Noble Cheviot Serge, weighty and weather-resisting.

II. John Noble Costume Coating, smooth-surfaced.

A FULL DRESS LENGTH of either cloth (6yd. 52in. wide) for 7/6. Carriage 8d. **7/6**

COLOURS of all Costumes are Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Fawn, Grey, Royal Blue, Crimson, and Reseda.

The Three Sizes in Stock are 34, 36, and 38 in. round bust (under arms) Waists 24, 26, 28 in.; Skirt being 38, 40, and 42 in. long in front. Any other size can be specially made to measure **1/6** extra.

Model 1014.

Model 1083.

Well made Bodice, satin lined and sleeves lined, prettily trimmed black Russ braid and embroidery in contrasting shade. **10/6** Price complete, **10/6**. Carriage, 6d. The Skirt alone for 5/6. Carriage 5d.

Model 1014.

A Smart Frock, with kilted skirt attached to bodice of same material, and a smart Reefer Coat, lined through and finished off with gilt buttons. The two garments together form a splendid outfit; while the frock alone can be worn for school or house wear. The Jacket too, would look well with any other frock. In Black and Navy only.

Lengths	21	24	27	30	33	36 in.
Prices	7/11	8/11	9/11	11/-	12/9	14/9 each.

Postage, 6d. extra.

Bankers—"London City and Midland" Bank Ltd.

Kindly name *Short Stories* when writing to

JOHN NOBLE LTD. Brook Street Mills, MANCHESTER

You will be pleased with CHANCELLOR SOAPS.

That's why we want **YOU** to try them. As First Prize we offer a **£300 HOUSE**, and hundreds of other prizes. By using Chancellor Soaps and saving your wrappers till **June** you get the best and cheapest Soaps extant, you **may get** the House or a 50 guinea Piano, you **will probably get** a splendid Lady's Silver Watch, or if not you **must get** a money Prize.

Every Competitor gets one.

GET A BAR TO-DAY!

Won't You?

Send 4d. for Sample Bar

GIVEN AWAY
HUNDREDS OF POUNDS IN PRIZES - EVERY COMPETITOR GETS ONE OR
A £300 HOUSE
LIBERAL PAYMENT FOR WRAPPERS. PARTICULARS WITH EACH 2½D AND 3D BAR.
CHANCELLOR SOAPS

to 13 Clerkenwell Road, London.

By E. MILLS.

III.—The Beauty and the Beast.

"Miss Brandon, may I introduce my old friend, Phil North?"

Miss Brandon bowed graciously, and smiled assent.

Mr. North also bowed. He had his programme in his hand, and moved a little nearer as he said:

"May I have the pleasure of a kiss?"

He watched her gravely as he said it, with his dark eyes, whose expression had been pronounced "bold" by more than one observer, although he would himself have been utterly astonished had anyone told him so.

He was astonished to see the wave of colour that dyed the girl's fair flower-like face, and the blaze of indignation that flared up in her blue eyes.

"Certainly not," she said drawing herself to her full height, which was not inconsiderable, and, sweeping aside her shimmering satin skirts with a quick gesture, she turned her back on the two men, and left the verandah with the air of a tragedy queen.

"What the dickens do you mean?" gasped the big man, who was responsible for the situation.

"What the dickens does she mean?" answered North, who was a little man, and, like most little men, had a temper of his own.

"Well, a fellow does not usually ask for a kiss the moment he is introduced to a girl, and such a girl, too. Why, man, you should think yourself lucky to get near her at all to-night."

"Did I ask for a kiss? Well, I meant a dance, though she looks kissable enough, in all conscience."

The big man, whose name was Redwood, laughed.

"Don't excuse yourself to her that way, Phil. She's not of quite the same pattern as most of the women here, brought up amongst the highly respectable section of Sydney society, and not long from school. But my own opinion is that you won't get the chance to explain. Girls of her age are always on their dignity. I've the next dance with her, so I'll leave you to think it out."

North lit a cigar, and strolled to his old place in the shadow of the grape vines. He had been standing there for a good half-hour watching the dancers, until Redwood discovered him, and brought about his introduction to Eve Brandon.

All rights reserved.]

The girl had moved to the end of the verandah, and had been standing quite close to him, although she was unaware of the fact.

It was a warm night, and the breeze, laden with the scent of sweet night-blooming flowers and the freshness of the great scrubs over which it had come, was welcome to them both. The man from his shadowy corner could see how it ruffled the little curls on her forehead. He was so close that he could mark the rise and fall of the filmy laces round her throat; so close that he could smell the fragrance of the wild jasmine at her breast. And then—well, after all, Phil North was a man, and a young and strong one, and, truth to say, the thought had entered his mind that this was a case to suit the poet who wrote—

> "A man had given all other bliss,
> And all his worldly worth for this,
> To waste his whole heart in one kiss
> Upon her perfect lips."

But he had no idea of that thought's tenacity, or that it would insist upon expression in the way it had done.

They were both guests at Werrima Station for a week's fun and picnic races, but he had not had an opportunity of being introduced to her until the evening, and, now that the desired introduction had come off, he had (as he ruefully expressed it) "upset the apple-cart properly this time."

Eve, on her part, was just as disgusted. She had noticed the ugly, clever-looking little man all day, and had heard a good deal about him that interested her in one way and another, and now to find him so "impossible" was disappointing, to say the least.

"I suppose the 'champagne cup' is to blame, it seems to be the excuse for everything here," she thought. "But I thought he looked different. At any rate, I shall never on earth speak to or notice the awful man again. I wonder what Marion sees in him?"

Marion Hill, hostess and prime mover in all the merriment of Werrima race week, however, seemed to think a good deal of Philip North. She was a handsome, graceful woman, with dreamy, heavy-lidded, eyes, the

Digitized by Google

wife of the popular manager of Werrima. They had no children, a fact which did not disturb either of them, and, indeed, children would have been very much out of place at Werrima, especially during race week, when the house was given over to riotous enjoyment, and the stables to strange, satin-skinned horses, and the hours before midnight to dancing and flirtation, and the hour after midnight to billiards, betting, and whisky.

Eight years ago Marion Wade had married Charlie Hill for love, against her parents' wishes, it was said. She had money of her own, and as he managed a station for an English baronet, with more money and faith than experience, life went very smoothly indeed. How much love remained it was hard to say, but the spirit of good fellowship was apparently unbroken; he went his way and she went hers, and both flirted often and lightly, and were all the more pleasant to meet in consequence.

It was quite a settled thing that during each race week Marion should have as *attaché* the most desirable man at these yearly gatherings; equally a settled thing that the coveted position was never held two years running by the same man. Thus people had wondered not a little to see Phil North attendant cavalier again this year.

As a fact Phil liked this clever, bright hostess immensely, all the more so that she was apparently cold-hearted, and did not expect too much sentiment from her friends. She was a clever woman, and knew how far to take the rope allowed her by a world which is inclined to be lenient to beauty, combined with wealth and the power of amusing this same world.

But, quick as Phil was to read character in most cases, he failed to see the depths in one clear, apparently shallow stream, failed to see that Marion had buried one love, had discovered one idol's feet of clay long ago, and that her starved heart was rapidly enthroning another in its place—shyly, and perhaps scarcely acknowledged to herself.

He came quickly to her, racquet in hand.

The evening before the race day she was chatting to Eve, and resting in a long, low chair by her open bedroom window.

Out on the lawn four men, including her husband and Philip North, were playing tennis. Mr. Redwood was lounging about smoking and picking up balls.

"Has he proposed yet?" said Marion, indicating with a wave of her white, much-beringed hand the burly form of the tennis scout.

Eve blushed. It was an open secret that the young squatter was over head and ears in love with her, an equally open secret that she was skilfully fencing off his declaration, for Miss Brandon hated scenes.

"Charlie wanted to bet me last night that he had managed it while he tightened your horse's girths for you yesterday," continued Marion, "but I see it is a joy to come yet. Why are you going to refuse him? He is well off and good-looking."

"Not so good-looking as your husband is, Mrs. Hill," answered the girl, trying to divert the conversation. "How well he looks at tennis too. I suppose you are very proud of him?"

"Oh! very."

Marion's answer might have meant anything. What it did mean was that the husband of her love and trust was dead long ago, and she had no interest whatever in this selfish, cold man who had emerged, phœnix-like, from the ashes of lost illusions.

"You are hard to please," she continued after a pause. "None of the men here seem to find favour in your sight. Most women like Mr. North, for instance, and you are scarcely civil to him. Why is it?"

Eve moved uneasily in her lounge chair. "I don't know," she stammered. "He is so ugly, and I hate ugly people near me, and he is so insignificant I quite forget he is here at all."

"Yes, he is ugly," said her hostess musingly, "but he has a very gentlemanly 'back,' and he is the last person one would dream of describing as 'insignificant.' That is only a poor reason. Please don't 'wriggle' so, it does not suit your 'long loveliness.' Only little women can wriggle with impunity."

"Then, perhaps, it is because he does not like me."

"Are you sure of that?"

Miss Brandon blushed again.

When Mrs. Hill did open those heavy-lidded eyes of hers to their full extent, their gaze was wonderfully alert and penetrating.

"Quite sure," she said. "Besides, he never looks at any of us girls when you are by."

"He is a very old friend of mine, Eve; but all men like to make new friends sometimes. I fancy still that you two have something between you. Have you ever met before? Now, child, confess?"

Her manner and words were playful, but her wonderful eyes seemed to demand and command an answer. Hers was the stronger will, so Eve answered truthfully.

"If you must know, then, there is a reason, and a very good one, which causes me to hate, and loathe, and despise him, even if he is your friend."

Marion laughed. "There, there, do not get so excited, no man is worth extremes of love or hate, especially on such a hot day as this. Run away, pretty one, or you will be late for dinner. I see the men have finished, and are departing to the bathing pool."

Digitized by Google

But as Eve left the room, the other woman said to herself, "Methinks you protest too much, my friend." Then she stepped to the French window, and called, "Phil."

He came quickly to her, racquet in hand.

"You will drive me to-morrow, as usual?" she said.

"Of course, Marion, if you will have me. I shall be only too delighted."

"We start rather earlier than the others as I must see about the picnic baskets. Mr. Redwood is driving Miss Brandon. He means to put his fate to the touch tomorrow. They will make a handsome couple."

She watched his square-jawed, clean-shaven face intently. Was it only gathering dusk that put that shadow in his deep, brown eyes (they were the only good feature he had).

"Undoubtedly," he said. "I thought Redwood had it badly. Ah, well! he would not be the first heart lost at Werrima races. Remember we had two engagements as a result last year."

"You speak feelingly. One would almost think you had lost your heart."

The blood rushed to his face.

"Have you lost it, Phil?" she said softly.

He looked her straight in the face.

"Yes," he said simply, "I have; and you know it, Marion, as you know most things."

"I!" she faltered. "Why should I know, Phil?"

"Coming for a swim, old man?"

Charlie Hill's deep voice drowned her low question as he came towards them, and leant against the window tugging at his moustache, with a quizzical look in his narrow blue eyes.

"Directly," said Phil; "when I have got rid of my racquet," and taking off his hat to Marion, he walked away.

Marion closed the windows with a bang, and while Mr. Hill waited for their mutual friends, his thoughts seemed to be pleasant, for he laughed to himself once or twice.

"The fact is," he said half-aloud, "Marion is inclined to make an ass of herself, and I'm not inclined for law courts and sentiment. It's about time to settle things. If that pretty fool Eve Brandon was not so devilish proud and school girlish, things might safely be let alone. As it is, Charlie Hill will take the rôle of good angel to a deserving couple, and Phil shall have his chance to-morrow; he's got too much at stake to miss it."

Then he laughed.

"And Marion thought he meant her. Good Lord! but it is rich."

* * * * *

The Werrima Amateur Race Club had a fine day for their races, although it was a trifle hot, and so all the more suitable to the white frocks worn by the majority of the women.

The driving arrangements were in the hands of Mr. Hill, and so Redwood was fain to bow to his decision that he was only to have the joy of taking Miss Brandon to, not from, the races. In fact, Redwood implied that he himself would bring her back.

"She's the prettiest girl here, and it's about my turn, you know," he said.

Redwood felt that such a chance must not be wasted, and poor Eve had an anxious time striving to ward off the proposal which threatened to "break out" every moment. She chattered gaily all the way—about the races chiefly—and showed a consuming thirst for

The bough had come down, striking the back of the buggy.

information in the minutest details. She made him listen to the histories of her various school friends. She gave him an exhaustive recipe for Indian chutney; and in fact, never allowed him to get within an inch of dangerous ground, although he was stupid and persistent with all the obstinacy of a one-idea'd man.

Once at the course matters were easier. Her buggy was soon surrounded, and Redwood was obliged to leave to ride in the race for the Ladies' Bracelet. His horse came in second to Charlie Hill's Mazeppa, ridden by its owner. Very handsome Marion Hill's husband looked in his blue and gold. Eve could not help contrasting him with Phil North.

"He looks like a horrid little jockey," she thought. "I suppose he does ride well, as everyone says so; but he is 'horsey' enough, at any time, with his clean-shaven face and heavy jaw."

She must have spoken her last thoughts aloud, for Redwood, who was standing near, made answer:

"No, I don't think North does look his best in silk; but he's a tip-top rider, though he was beaten for the Bracelet. Just wait and see him in the Hurdle Race. He's bound to pull that off. It comes on after lunch. But I have something to say to you, Miss Brandon—Eve."

"For goodness' sake make up a sweep on this next race, Mr. Redwood. I feel I shall be lucky, and I have lost steadily all day. I will run across to Marion and see if she will join." Springing lightly from her seat Eve walked to the big drag, where most of the ladies were stationed.

Digitized by Google

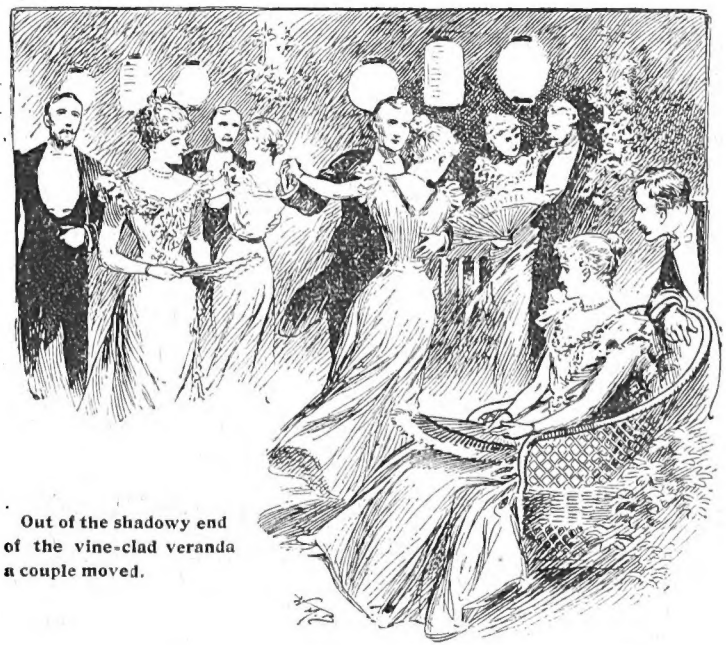
Mr. Redwood began to wonder if that "daughter of the gods, divinely tall and most divinely fair," was not a little bit deaf! The Hurdle Race was the last event, and the most exciting. North got well away with his big chestnut, but at the last hurdle his horse fell, and Eve screamed for it seemed to her that the whole field had raced over him. Everyone seemed to be running to the rails, only she could not move or speak, until Redwood broke from the crowd and came towards her with the words, "He's not hurt, just a bit shaken and bruised and a few cut fingers—wonderfully narrow escape; the black mare's hoofs were within an ace of his skull. Hill is riding to win now; the Werrima stables are in luck today. Were you frightened, Miss Brandon?"

"No; at least, yes. No one likes to see an accident How white Mrs. Hill looks; she must be on tenterhooks until the day is over, and her husband is safe. I hope I shall not marry a man who races!"

Redwood smiled under his heavy moustache at Eve's sympathy for Mrs. Hill, but he kept his thoughts to himself, and looking round discovered that he was alone with the girl, and, moreover, that the accident had unnerved her and stopped her flow of words.

"I would give up racing if you said the word," he began, and then and there laid his heart and fortune at her feet.

Eve was obliged to refuse a lover and lose a friend. He had such a good idea of his attractions that it took some time to convince him, and Eve was glad when Mr. Hill cantered up with the words, "We must make a bee line for home; a real wild storm is brewing; the black boy is bringing your horses, Redwood; you had better go down to the creek and lend a hand."



Out of the shadowy end of the vine-clad veranda a couple moved.

Redwood withdrew sulkily, and Eve said, "Oh, can't I go with Mrs. Hill or the girls?"

"It's all right, Miss Brandon, you shall have another driver; it's all settled, but I must be off to the slip-rails. Lance has all he can do with the four greys."

He cantered off after the drag, which was just disappearing over the rise.

Redwood put in the horses, and then handed Eve the reins.

"Good-bye, Miss Brandon," he said. "You have doubtless heard that you are to have a more welcome driver. He is at present washing the mud off his face at the creek. Here, Sampson, bring me my horse." And the boy brought up the chesnut. Mr Redwood flung himself into the saddle, and galloped off at a breakneck pace after the last cloud of dust on the ridge.

Eve gazed helplessly round, a sudden dread at her heart. It could not be. Yes, it was Phil North walking slowly from the creek, intent upon twisting a handkerchief round the fingers of his left hand.

"He has done it on purpose," she thought, but changed her mind when she saw his startled face.

"You," he cried. "I beg your pardon, Miss Brandon. I had no idea of this. If you prefer to go yourself I can easily walk to the station, it is only four miles."

Eve glanced at the black west. "Of course we must carry out Mr. Hill's arrangements," she said. "We need not speak at all. In fact, I prefer silence when I am driving."

Phil looked at the gathering storm, and decided to put his pride in his pocket.

"I also think that under certain circumstances silence is golden," he said. "I know you drive well, which fact no doubt accounts for Hill's arrangement, although my hand looks worse than it is."

And he got in beside her. Eve set her lips, and sent the bays off at a sharp pace. The journey would not last long if she could help it!

The storm was dreadfully close. Twice Phil looked back uneasily. He calculated that it would overtake them in the ring-barked timber of the home paddock, and the prospect was not pleasant. The horses were becoming restive at the sound of the dull roar behind them, and Phil looked at the girl's slender white wrists, and said:

"Let me take the reins for a time. Rob Roy is a beggar to pull."

"I prefer to drive," said Miss Brandon freezingly. A few minutes afterwards they entered the ring-barked paddock, and, as North expected, the storm burst on them in all its fury. It began with a vivid flash of lightning, to play and dance about the plated parts of the harness. Eve did what Marion Hill would never have done—dropped the reins, and covered her eyes from the blinding glare with her hands.

Phil caught the reins, and steered the horses skilfully back to the road.

"Put that shawl thing round your head," he shouted as the biting, blinding rain deluged them. Eve obediently discarded her sopping chiffon hat, and tied the shawl round her face, now white and drawn with fear.

The wind was tearing off limbs of the dead trees, so that Phil had his work cut out to get a road for the trap.

At one part trees were down on both sides, and the saplings were too thick to allow the buggy off the track.

Digitized by Google

Straight above hung a big limb, swaying at every blast of the wind. Phil thought he heard a crack, but there was no going back.

"Here's for it," he shouted. "Hold on to me, Miss Brandon."

Eve held on, clasping his shoulder with both hands.

She never knew quite what happened next. There seemed to be a general mix up of rotten wood, blinding rain, and fearful jolts. The bough had come down striking the back of the buggy, and in consequence the, horses were off, with the bits in their teeth, dragging the whole over everything. She knew that Phil had thrown his arm round her for one thing, and for another that she had hidden her face in his shoulder. Then he took his arm away, and was engaged in mastering the horses. The danger was nearly over now, for the flying storm had passed on, and the horses were steadying as they dashed out of the timber on to an open road.

Then she knew that Phil was soothing and comforting her. Miss Brandon was crying like a frightened child.

As they drew up at the slip-rails he looked down at the drenched figure.

Of her face he could only see one smooth white cheek and the curve of a little ear, round which the rain-wet curls clung pathetically. It brought back that warm night a week ago when he had watched the same little curls ruffled by the breeze, and had thought strange thoughts about the haughty young beauty.

"Eve," he said; "Eve."

What was there in his deep tones that brought the blood surging back to her face? She looked up with startled wide blue eyes, the tear-drops still clinging to the long lashes.

"Eve," he said, half tremulously, half playfully, "may I have the pleasure of a kiss?"

And Eve did not say "Certainly not" this time.

Some hours afterwards, when the Werrima house-party was ending up the festivities with a dance on the ve anda, a man sat down to the piano and struck up "Bitter-Sweet."

Marion Hill was standing near, looking listless and bored, but at the opening bars of the waltz a quick light came into her dreamy eye.

"He always dances this one with me," she murmured; "always."

Out of the shadowy end of the vine-clad veranda a couple moved. The man slipped his arm round the girl's waist, and they glided away to the music's plaintive sweetness.

As they passed Marion saw that the man was Phil North, and that his plain face was all aglow, with the light that never was on land or sea.

A rush of blinding tears dimmed her eyes; but no one saw them fall, for Marion Hill was a brave woman and had known the bitterness of lost illusions before.

The man at the piano played well. He glided now from the "Bitter-Sweet" to "Never Again," and these were the waltz tunes that Marion hated all through the long life that was before her.

Old Bullion: "What! You wish to marry my daughter? She is a mere schoolgirl yet."

Suitor: "Yes, sir, I came early to avoid the rush."

Mother: "I wonder what makes that dog afraid of me? He always behaves as if he thought I was going to kill him."

Little Daughter: "I expect he's seen you whipping me."

Old Lady (compassionately): "Poor fellow! I suppose your blindness is incurable. Have you ever been treated?"

Blind Man (sighing): "Yes, mum, but not often. 'Tain't many as likes to be seen goin' into a public-house with a blind beggar."

Artist: "Oh! you think the background's 'beastly,' do you? Perhaps the cattle are 'beastly,' too, though I flatter myself ——"

Friendly Artist: "Oh, no, my dear fellow! That's just what they are not."

That Would Never Do.—"There is one great objection to electing women as representatives of the people."

"What is that?"

"Complications would arise should they pair with the masculine members."

A far-sighted miss of seventeen summers has concluded to marry a big man for her first husband, and a little one for the second, so that she can cut the clothes of the first down and make them over to his successor. Thus the hard times force home lessons of rigid economy and practical sense upon tender childhood.

THE LAST OF CAPTAIN KETTLE.

The last recorded adventure of Captain Kettle appears in the June number of Pearson's Magazine, now on sale. The last adventure is even more exciting than those which have gone before, and tells of the strange fate that ultimately befell the intrepid little Captain.

In the June Pearson's there will be found also, among other interesting features,

"Ballooning After Shooting Stars,"

A graphic description of the strange experiences that befell a party of French astronomers, who ascended in a balloon to make observations of shooting stars in November last. The article is illustrated with some remarkable sketches, made by the Painter-in-Chief of the French Society of Aerial Navigation, which give a good idea of life above the clouds.

"Side-Lights on Convict Life,"

An account of a visit to Parkhurst, Isle-of-Wight, the convict convalescent home. This article is illustrated with a remarkable series of photographs, shewing convicts working on the prison farm, where they make hay and tend the pigs and cows, and generally lead a healthy, out-door life.

"Torpedoes Steered by Light,"

Is another interesting article in the June Pearson's, describing a marvellous new invention, by which it is possible to steer torpedoes and other crafts solely by rays of light, without any visible material connection between the steersman and the craft controlled.

Altogether, in the June Pearson's, there are seven complete stories and nine articles, profusedly illustrated throughout by photographs, paintings, and the work of the first black-and-white artists of the day.

Digitized by Google

The Flower of His Race.

"MADAME, your son will never be a man."

"Monsieur, he will be a noble one."

"I ask if it is possible that a boy—a boy of twelve—should have hair like that—a girl's *coiffure?*"

"It shall be cut if you wish it."

"And that velvet suit and that lace collar; he is a mere doll!"

"He is dressed as becomes his rank."

"And he is as pious as a—as a——"

"Stop, Henri! Your ancestor, Enguerand le Brave, was more so."

As she pleaded for the child's faith a quicker flash came into the child's eyes—those wonderful French eyes that are serious and gay, spiritual and dreamy, bright, yet tender. With her lig t *fichu* and fine delicate features, she resembled some soft miniature of a woman who was of the old *régime.*

Her husband evidently belonged to the same period in attachment.

The semblance of a *jabot* beneath his clean-shaved, aristocratic chin spoke clearly of his tastes.

His character went further back; it had originated twelve hundred years ago with the race of lofty-souled heroes.

He believed himself possessed of the identical nature of his forefathers, but time brings modifications, and psychology is full of nice problems.

D'Artagnan de Chancy de St. Luc was a *savant*, which Enguerand the Crusader had not been; he despised effeminacy, yet his great-grandfather had shone as the most graceful and accomplished profligate of his time.

He said his son should be a soldier and an academician, a knight and a scholar, clad in steel and in satin, the flower of his race, the flower of the stock.

The boy was playing upon the lawn. His parents sat in the open window in the quaint *salon* of their chateau.

This was no grim dungeon. The ancestral home had been burnt down at the invasion of the province, so the family retired to a modest country seat, but there was something to tell dead tales in each cheerful room.

The proud escutcheon of the D'Artagnan was in the centre of the wood mosaic floor; the miniatures collected in the gold and velvet *étagère* were family relics—portraits of men and woman who had moved meteor-like in the brilliant courts of France; pastels, pale and old-fashioned, hung in the frames of last century; everywhere a fragrance of musty, sweet mementoes, a veritable perfume of the past.

Out in the sunshine the boy was running against the wind, his hair blown back, his eyes laughing. The dainty feet scarce touched the grass as he flew swiftly on.

"There, Madame, look! he is a perfect baby! And when it thunders he turns pale."

"He is very young; he will outgrow his nervousness; it is not fear."

"He has no character, no ambition; he will be what our neighbours call a 'milksop.'"

Madame de St. Luc coloured faintly with a glow that was more bloom than blush. These constant reprovals vexed and wearied her. Passionately fond of his son, the old no' leman seemed to have but one way of showing his tenderness—harassing, endless recriminations at everything the boy said or did.

"He is far from perfect," she rejoined (though in the depth of her mother's heart she wondered what he lacked), "but he has sterling qualities. Did he ever tell a lie?"

"A lie, Madame! A D'Artagnan lie! He will be a peer of France!"

As the brown eyes met the grey ones it would be difficult to measure th> pride of that double glance; but the woman, from her vast experience of the world, seemed to add that the reason was not insufficient.

"One of the fifty; there are only fifty of us," murmured the peer, stroking his chin. "And he shall be more besides—orator, statesman."

"Henri, you forget!"

"Marie Therese, I forget nothing. What is the present disorder of things? The king is dead; but my son shall shine in whatever line he chooses. He shall be first—first, you understand—none above him. His ancestors have held throne and State in check; he shall not be less than they. We must marry him well, *ma chere*; our line must never end."

The woman sat with her white hands folded; occasionally the taper fingers twitched,

She was looking at the long row of bouleaux, fretting by the riverside, the apple trees with their September fruit ripe on the straggling boughs, the smooth green, the child at play. A ray like unceasing sunlight shone about his head.

He came and stood before her, his oval face alight with the exhilarating flush of health and motion, his large eyes sparkling, his joyous lips parted for speech or smile—and she forgot all else.

He was her son, her best beloved, her own.

She called him tenderly, "Loulou," and he lifted his brow to be kissed.

What was the world to her?

How distant is that period! How colourless and dim are the trifling scenes in the light of their long, long ago! Turning over these reminiscences, they exhale a faint, dusty odour, like the leaves of some aged book.

Yet the d y made a mark in three lives.

D'Artagnan proceeded to compile a treaty upon theoretic education as a guide to his son's tutors. Louis was to be what no other ever had been before—perfect in every branch—a prodigy of mental and physical health and agility.

It would all come in time if his rules were diligently followed, and the Duke spared no labour, no pains, grinding out his own life in the endeavour to render the boy faultless.

Madame de St. Luc cut the child's beautiful hair with her own hands. It hangs still in a carved frame on the faded wall.

To Louis in particular, the day remained memorable.

He was, to his great joy, delivered of his capillary torment, and his father, upon congratulating him, gravely bade him leave play and seriously think of manhood. The latter word meant little to the candid mind, but the first cloud loomed in the bright life with the former part of the injunction. Henceforth the golden hours were less sweet.

Two preceptors divided morning and noon into regular

Digitized by Google

periods for various studies, dogging his every step. Riding, fencing, dancing, all were cultivated; he had very little recreation of a lighter sort.

It was scarcely a happy life, but despite overwork and forced mental application, it seemed as though in the exceptionally gifted boy D'Artagnan's theories were realised.

At eighteen years of age the young Prince of La Pheridiere was delivered to a travelling tutor, sound in every limb and organ, light and well turned, unusually well read, dexterous in manly sports, and fitted for any career. On his return from his travels he was to enter the *grand monde* in Paris and decide in what line he would be glorious—for glorious he must be; his birth, his name, his position infallibly required it.

D'Artagnan, more white, more bent, more steeped in blind ambition, still repeated to the patient woman at his side:

"The flower of his race, Madame, the flower of his race. What can he not attain?"

To her he was still Loulou, only Loulou—a mere child.

She knew him better than did his father; all the learning, all the skill lavished upon him left him unconscious of his worth and simple as when he frolicked in the sunny garden.

News came unfrequently from the travellers. Louis was at Antwerp, Louis was at Leipsic, Louis was in Switzerland, he crossed the Alps, and Madame grew anxious, for Italy was then in a state of political fermentation which threatened a crisis. Then followed a long interval during which no letter came; then the storm burst over the peaceful chateau.

The tutor reappeared alone; his charge had enlisted in the Zouaves.

D'Artagnan was beside himself, raging and fuming. He had never expected this.

Madame, with brave, unflinching brow and proud grace, said she was glad. Her boy was proving himself what she had dreamed him to be. Was not the Pontiff's cause a crusade which Enguerand himself might not have disdained?

Then St. Luc was pacified, and the two aged hearts beat in unison fast and strong in the glory of their son's decision. He had but done what the flower of the nobility were doing all over France.

With the morrow came mortal terrors to quench the mother's enthusiasm; the father, lost anew in his castle building, muttered more than once:

"He will rise, he will rise! Commander-in-Chief of the Pontifical Forces. Yes, I should like that."

Neither knew how the boy had presented himself at all in the crowd of volunteers, with no recommendation save his fine, high-bred face, and the courage in his eyes.

He had given his name, "Louis D'Artagnan," and was serving in the grey jacket under an Irish corporal.

Weeks elapsed. From time to time he wrote home. His father eagerly read those bright short missives.

"A splendid career, Marie Therese—splendid! He will surpass his ancestors after all."

The mother prayed he might be kept from harm and bloodshed. Together they scanned the papers for any items concerning the troubles in Italy. When the critical position of the Pope or fresh outbreaks were mentioned, St. Luc grew angry and Madame trembled.

The peer marvelled that his son, who would be one of the fifty, and so important a personage, was never named.

Then the fighting began. The Zouaves were ordered to the front.

Gaily they marched, for soldiers must rejoice when they fight, when they fall. Perhaps among the merriest beneath the waving glory of the Papal flag—that brave, staunch flag which has wrung the deepest throbs from hearts of steel—was the boy whose nimble feet beat time to the martial strain.

That campaign, brief and glorious, is chronicled in history.

On the eve of the battle—why mention the date? All the world knows it—the Zouaves, kneeling upon the earth which was soon to be moistened with their blood, confessed their sins, and at dawn, with the awakening universe for a sanctuary, received the Blessed Eucharist.

Drawn up in proud array they witnessed the beginning of hostilities. The Italian troops opened fire.

The Pontifical troops responded, advancing beneath the volley.

Men fell, but the ranks closed up—grim, unmoved. Bravely up the hill they went, as though before them was glory, not death. To right, to left, the enemy's wings descend surrounding the gallant host they outnumber by thousands. The leaders behold the peril of that calculated attack. There was but one way to save the army.

"*Zouaves en avant!*"

With a mighty shout, forward spring the Zouaves.

Beneath the impetuous rush of the gaitered feet the earth seems to quiver; the lightning of the fixed bayonets flashes from rank to rank.

Onward they fly!

The immense living barrier at last breaks and recedes.

There was one who fought with the desperate intoxication of old blood warmed like old wine; one whose name has been as a shield at the elbow of kings upon every battlefield of France.

At the onset he had prayed through his clenched teeth half child, half soldier. Then the magic word, like bugle-call, rang out, and each man was a hero.

"*Zouaves en avant!*"

Breathless, with blazing eyes, La Pheridiere had joined in the magnificent charge. Wounded, he fought on; perchance he did not fall; yet later a shot felled him.

Raising himself upon one knee—he could not stand—he called to his comrades to set him on his feet, but they tore on.

As he struggled, a sabre gash across the forehead sent him reeling. Man after man stepped upon or leaped over his body in one whirling avalanche up the incline.

The conflict waxed furious.

Out-numbered—not out-fought—for one instant, the Zouaves tottered.

Then the trumpets sounded and from the plain came the French to the rescue.

They had long waited the summons and swept over the volunteer forces with mad, reckless bravery, trampling the dead and wounded. With them went the roar of the battle, the whizzing bullet, the shouts that encourage and electrify.

It was the *furia francese*, which has never been known to fail.

On the heights musketry rattled, shot answered shot. French cries answered and drowned the Italian ones. Behind, fainter and fainter grew the din of strife.

Digitized by Google

Battery smoke hung dark and low, filling the air with the smell of gunpowder—that close, penetrating smell that at once stifles and makes the heart beat with quicker throb. In the gruesome silent howls of anguish are broken by deep-drawn groans and the blasphemy of unbelieving lips; often is a prayer sobbed out. Scattered hither and thither, broken and twisted, lie the weapons that have done the fell work. Inextricably entangled, living and dead stretched out together, sometimes the former are crushed beneath the weight of the latter. Everywhere are death gurgles and contortions and frightful agonies, all the glamour gone, only the veritable sickening horror left. It is good that no mother comes to the battlefields of men.

Where he had fallen Louis d'Artagnan remained. He could not move. Occasionally a moan broke from the colourless lips. Bare-headed, disfigured, his face stained with dust and sweat and blood, it would have been difficult to recognise the blithe, handsome boy. Every limb ached with fever and intense pain.

Night came on, increasing the terror of the ghastly scene, moulding into one dark mass of suffering the separate groups of fearful, helpless actors. The cold stiffness of the wind which blows at the twelfth hour roused La Pheridiere from his stupor.

He endeavoured to raise his head.

Opening his large, dull eyes, which but a while ago had flashed heroic fire, he looked around in the dim light upon the deformity of distorted bodies and rigid countenances.

"Jesus, mercy!" he muttered, and then sank back, dizzy, exhausted. "Water!—I thirst."

He was lying in the dust and glory of a great battle, but he only felt the pangs of his own human, excruciating sufferings.

"Comrade, your hand," implored a man at his elbow. "They have shot my eyes out. I cannot see you. I thing I am going."

D'Artagnan raised himself, his features soothed like those of some pitying angel, and pressed the coarse peasant hand in his.

"Friend, I am here!" he murmured, in his quiet, tender voice.

"It is good to know someone is near. Oh, my head, my head."

With an effort that had made his blood to flow afresh La Pheridiere feebly drew off the dear jacket he had been so proud of—and pushed it gently under the Zouave's head.

"Say," whispered the palsied lips, "the names of the little ones at home—I can't remember."

Louis closed his eyes; he had never known, but believed, he, too, had forgotten. The grip of the callous fingers grew tighter upon his own.

"The prayer my mother taught me," murmured the soldier.

By divine intuition rose the pure, calm tones of the boy's voice.

"*Ave Maria gratia plena!*" and at the end: "Now—at the hour of our death—adieu!"

Around the two silence seemed to grow deeper. Further off shrieked an Italian in the last throes of death.

D'Artagnan fell heavily upon his side; the crouched figure seemed to encircle him and dance, pointing and leering at him. The wheels of a great mill revolved upon the axle of his brain, water roared and tumbled in his ears. Then there stood the long row of silvery, fluttering bouleaux, the apple trees at home. He was running swiftly upon the lawn, his foot so light! and the grass was covered thick with daisies, like white snow flakes.

His father looked out, bidding him leave play and be a man, but his voice was kind and he smiled at the laughing velvet-clad peer. The young, tremulous voice rang out, and with fearful joy, with fearful anguish, imploringly over the hideous pain, "Maman! Maman!"

He ran to her through the little, sweet flowers. She pushed back his hair, the tumbled, golden hair she used to love, and kissed him a long, soft kiss upon the brow. It eased the pain of the burning wound, but her tears fell on his cheeks, and he awoke shivering in the heavy dew.

Dawn lighted the sky and earth, making the world like some grand new creation, where trouble and sorrow are unknown; it showed up in weird relief the aspect of the graveless cemetery; it shone upon the smooth, boyish head, about which the unrisen sun seemed already to glow.

D'Artagnan turned. He felt strong, he felt well; then, suddenly, he gasped, his eyes opened wide—wide as though in the roseate east some glad, startling scene had greeted him.

He alone heard the solemn roll-call; as a soldier ready to obey, he cried:

"Christ, my Captain, I come, I come!"

Oddly enough, he was found without a coat. No one could explain it. He was lying forward with his seraph-like countenance concealed upon his chest, suspended by a gold chain were the medals of the Immaculate Conception and of his First Communion.

They buried him there among his brothers-in-arms—a hurried, obscure resting-place, meet for soldiers, where words of praise and tears of women do not fall.

None will find the exact spot—no stone keeps their names—but in the record of the living dead no one will be lost.

On the daily sheet, numbered among the slain, was the name of Louis D'Artagnan de Chancy, Prince de la Pheridiere.

In the quiet chateau, where the scent of roses made life pleasant and cock-crow was the loudest sound, the list was read.

The Peer fell forward on the printed page—as his son had fallen, the mother's heart, breaking, made no sound.

All was serene and peaceful as before.

For years St. Luc lived on, hale and unsuffering, the ghost of a woman moving patiently by his side.

"When La Pheridiere returns, Madame, I will present him to the King, and his Majesty will certainly appoint him Grand Marshal of France. He shall hold the kingdom in the hollow of his hand—yea, in the hollow of his hand! Did you say he has returned yet, Marie Therese? Oh, he will soon come—very soon. Let us find him a wife, *ma chère*, that the line may be be placed out of all peril of extinction; it must not end—it cannot end! He is the flower of his race—the flower—*n'est ce pas?*"

Morning and night she kisses some poor, discoloured hair in a priceless frame. She never speaks of him. Only sometimes in sleep she calls him softly, pitifully, lingering over each syllable, as though it would give back something to her love.

"Loulou! Loulou!"

Flies have crawled over the glass in the dark, unventilated boudoir. The Peer and Madame are both dead, and the chateau is closed; it has past into strangers' hands.

JOHN HARROD.

Digitized by Google

100,000 PRIZES.

A PRIZE FOR EVERY COMPETITOR.

1	Prize of	ONE HUNDRED POUNDS.
1	„	FIFTY POUNDS.
1	„	TWENTY POUNDS.
5,000	Prizes of	Handsome Watches.
5,000	„	Ladies' Companions.
5,000	„	Sporting Knives.
5,000	„	Hair Brushes.
5,000	„	Hand Mirrors.
5,000	„	Silver Brooches.
5,000	„	Gold-Plated Pencil-cases.
5,000	„	Silver Bangles.
5,000	„	Penknives.
5,000	„	Pen and Pencil Boxes (3 deckers.)
10,000	„	Paint Boxes.
10,000	„	Boxes of Dominoes.
10,000	„	Pearl and Porcupine Penholders.
10,000	„	Compasses.
10,000	„	Boxes of Crayons.
20	Prizes of	ONE POUND each.
20	„	TEN SHILLINGS each.

From now until November 25th a coupon will appear on the front page of cover of PEARSON'S WEEKLY, HOME NOTES, SHORT STORIES, and PASTIMES. To the person who collects the greatest number of these coupons and sends them to us on a date we shall specify later, we will give the sum of One Hundred Pounds; to the collector of the second greatest number we will give Fifty Pounds, and so on until the whole 100,043 prizes have been awarded.

SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER.

This is the only competition that has ever been devised in which every competitor will get a prize.

All the articles enumerated above are of the best make and well worth possessing, therefore no prize will be given to any person who sends fewer than 200 coupons.

The prizes altogether will cost us about £10,000.

Ask any friend of yours who reads our papers to give you his coupons.

The Competition will run for twenty-nine weeks. If the members of your family take in "P.W.," "H.N.," "S.S.," and "Pastimes," and you collect the coupons from each, this will give you 114 coupons. You can easily obtain from your friends the balance to make up the 200, in which case you will be certain of getting a prize.

A TIP.

Don't be afraid to send only 200 coupons. Sometimes the best competitions ever devised miss fire. People say, "What is the use of my going in for it? I won't win anything." These are just the occasions on which you will. If everybody thought the same, your 200 coupons would win you £100.

One Thousand Pounds for You

£100 FOR A NEWSAGENT OR BOOKSTALL CLERK. £5 FOR EACH OF THE BOOKSTALL BOYS.

TO win this substantial sum of money, all you have to do is to fill up the coupon below, giving in the proper place the number of births and the number of deaths which will occur in the thirty-three great towns in England and Wales for the week ending July 1st, 1899.

Then write down your name and address, and ask the newsagent or bookstall clerk from whom you obtained this copy of "S.S." to insert his name and address in the space provided. Although such a course is obviously to his advantage, it is not compulsory for the coupon to bear his signature.

Newsagents and bookstall clerks may sign any number of coupons.

To the person whose attempt is correct we will pay the sum of **£1,000.**

To the newsagent or bookstall clerk whose name appears on the winning coupon we will pay the sum of **£100,** and **£5** to each of the boys attached to the bookstall from which the paper was bought.

If no competitor estimates the correct number of births and deaths, the £1,000 will be awarded to the individual whose forecast is most nearly correct.

In the event of two or more persons being correct, the £1,000 will be divided amongst them. This condition applies also to the £100 for the newsagent or bookstall clerk, and the £5 for bookstall boys.

One competitor may send in any number of attempts.

It must be clearly understood that all persons who enter for this competition must abide by the decision of the Editor in any question that may arise in connection with the competition.

As a guide to your estimate we give below the number of Births and Deaths which have taken place in the thirty-three largest towns in England and Wales for the corresponding period during the past three years.

The figures published by the Registrar-General will be taken as correct. On December 2nd, 1898, a competition similar to this was declared legal by the Appeal Court.

Registered during the Week Ending July 4th, 1896.		Registered during the Week Ending July 3rd, 1897.		Registered during the Week Ending July 2nd, 1898.	
Births.	Deaths.	Births.	Deaths.	Births.	Deaths.
6,372	3,691	7,115	3,106	6,575	3,203

All attempts to be addressed to the Editor, Short Stories, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and the envelope to be marked in the left-hand corner with the word: "Births."

This Competition closes on Wednesday, June 28th.

S. S.

My estimate is - { *Births* ..... / *Deaths* ..... } *Write in large Figures.*

Name .....

Address .....

*Newsagent or Bookstall Clerk** .....

.....

* If a bookstall clerk, the name of the station will be sufficient.

THIS PRIZE IS IN CONJUNCTION WITH "PEARSON'S WEEKLY," "HOME NOTES," "SUNDAY READER," AND "PASTIMES."

Digitized by Google

.. From Prairie and Backwoods. ..

X.—A CALAVERAS HOLD-UP.

ONE sunny summer noon of the year 1880, a man lay under a clump of chaparral at the base of a scrub-oak, near a roadside in the Calaveras foothills. He lay face-downwards, with his head on his arms; and the flies crawled over the dirt on his clothes and the pistol at his belt, only suffering disturbance because of the industry of the black ant colony which had discovered meat among the bread crumbs that had fallen from his pocket.

He looked asleep, but, to one who might have seen, there were slits in the sombrero that covered his head, and the eyes behind them were not closed. Rather, they scarcely winked in their steady scrutiny.

The road here near the crest of the hill took a sharp right angle to the north, and picked its way brokenly to the summit over rocks and through stumps and standing trees. To the south-west below, it could be seen for miles on its upward course, appearing and disappearing among the open stretches and the woodland. The scrub-oak would have to lengthen its broad shadow very perceptibly before the man would find it necessary to get on his feet; so he allowed a portion of his attention to revert to the cause of his being here.

Billy Owen was not analytical. He did not go back any farther than his love for a woman as the representative cause of the present effect. The spirit of his ancestors, trained to struggle and conquest, had suffered a taint in bygone years, and he had become the son of an uncertain race. There were men of them rude in virtue as well as strength, and men of them branded with a shifting eye and hunted step.

Billy had always had his pleasure with a gun in his hand until these wondrous twelve months of his knowledge of Rudy. That that slight person had no acquaintance with the manner of his former life was due to the respect in which Billy held her. For himself, he couldn't get rid of a troublesome pride when he called up the men—the brakemen, and engine-drivers, and inflated conductors—who had backed away from the steel-ringed mouth of his revolver, his Betty. And the brakemen, and engine-drivers, and enflated conductors who hadn't backed away, and whom Betty had barked at, gave him almost more pride than the treasures he had borne off from under their bodies.

But a man must be capering to more than one tune if he's to dance in the open all his life, so Billy had been giving his later days to the panning for gold in secluded spots of the Californian Sierras; and the first Sunday that he had lent to the village had been taken by Rudy. He remembered it all very clearly. He had been so careful to shave. We must remember a moustache of straw colour that brought out the steel in his small grey eyes. He had not changed his working dress, for a knife slips down a yawning boot-leg, and a flannel shirt yields best to one's muscles in motion. A hat with a brim was the most comfortable, and Billy sauntered carelessly into the street.

It had seemed to him queer that the street was so empty. Only occasional men swung in and out of salon doors, and the rival hotel chairs rested wholly idle. But it was not long before he found the cause.

A little paint-blistered church stood round the corner, and its open doors had swallowed almost the entire populace. It seemed waiting for more, while the thin notes of its rejoicing bell chased each other out on the air. Service must have been about to begin, for there was only a girl standing out on the steps, and the horses in ranks along the fences, who slept, or brushed flies, or hated their neighbours, as their natures gave impulse.

Billy looked contemptuously at the church, and turned on his heel to shake off its dust just as the restless eyes of a high-headed roan brought him to a halt.

It was then that he had heard a voice he felt he would never forget.

"There is room," it called.

Billy Owen had gone on looking over the roan. He was not the man to waste Sunday in church.

"Father's to preach on fighting," he heard it again. "There are fights that he approves."

It was a voice, Billy thought, the bees would look for. He threw her a glance that shouldn't reveal any weakness for the sort of fighting that the parson approved of, and straightway forgot to look off again. Rudy Field was smiling at him, and Rudy was radiant with the spirit of well-doing. The bell's noisy excitement had given way to the voices of the people in an opening hymn of thanksgiving, and the girl hurried down the steps, passed the horses, and laid her hand on his arm.

Digitized by Google

"He says men ought to break each other's heads if there's cause," she added meaningly, turning her eyes away towards the church.

"If two men want to get up and fight just for the pleasure of fightin'," said Billy, "and are glad to shake hands when one of 'em is hollerin'?"

Rudy's gentle eyes gave out their inspiration.

"Come and see if he'll mention tha'," she said. And Billy went to his undoing.

It was never clear to him what the parson's fighting views really were. There must have been in them material of good sort, because he remembered the noisy approval of his fellow-men. As for himself, a straight little form and a thin little face, with a voice singing up to the angels, left no consciousness of a judicial nature. After the last rousing hymn and the dignity of the benediction, he had sat so still that the church was emptying and the parson was up to him. If Billy had wanted to, there would have been no escaping the zealous warmth of purpose which drew him into the family life and the church life of this country minister. The man had only Rudy and a rough little house, but the restlessness of his energy used them both for his ends.

And the days had taken wings. Billy found through the hours of his lonely working that there was something in his mind supplanting Betty and the bodies which were testimony of his prowess and his power.

Rudy's father had been Rudy's life, and she lay awake in the night now, because a man strong in his youth and the power of his love was coming between them. The atmosphere of her training had left her without the protection of suspicion, and Rudy had only the education that her frailness, their poverty, and shifting life could yield. Her feminine nature showed her Billy Owen's masterful physique, his superior strength, and tonic vitality. She had begun to have insight into Billy's will power. But, of all men, he gave to her deference, and gentleness, and the alertness of his interests.

And what she was conscious must come, came.

Two miners were hurt in an accident by fire, and the minister was called for in the absence of the doctor. He had arranged to hold services in a village three miles north, and Rudy was left to carry to it the news that the service could not be held. She put on a sunbonnet and went out to the barn. The old mare stepped listlessly into the shafts, when a shadow fell over the floor, and Billy filled up the doorway.

"Your father said I was to look out that you got there." He laughed, uncertain still of his welcome.

Rudy had dreaded the lonely twilight drive, and her face must have spoken for her tongue had not; but Billy took up the harnessing with a light on his own face that sent Rudy into the depths of her bonnet. She kept on her side of the mare, and buckled and strapped in a tangle of leather, with an indiscretion that sent her hands to the check at Jane's head just at the moment when Billy's must meet them.

And Billy held them close, while Jane dropped her nose and sniffed at some barley grains, indifferent to the fact that her toilet was forgotten.

"Your father'd give me the word to fight the man that could take ye from me now," Billy said.

And Rudy was whiter than the hair on Jane when it happened to be clean.

"It's my father I shall never leave," she answered him.

"It's the father, His book tells ye, shall be left for the husband."

Billy dropped her hands to come round and take her in his arms.

"Say no more, girl, but the word you love me."

And Rudy had said it. And Rudy had sobbed over it, and laughed over it, and sung over it before the message was delivered and Jane in her stall again.

This was a perplexity Rudy's father laid in Heaven's care. "There must be something to live on," he had said.

And what had always made Billy's living but his revolver—his Betty? The mining was snail's pace at best, and with Rudy on his heart there was mad need of haste. With everything at his hand and his Colt ready there were only the plans, which he straightway laid. Money for the northern mines passed under his nose once every month. Mounted messengers were the things he and Betty were used to, and the advantage of his isolated claim gave him the chance for doing in the hours of an unoccupied afternoon.

The flies lifted off on lazy wings as the figure under the chaparral at the base of the scrub-oak heaved on to an elbow and measured the shadow. With the sharp focus of quick sight, he turned to the road again. Down in the far distance a cloud of dust hung in the air. The man went on his stomach again. The flies settled, the ants took up their burden, and the summer sun burnt over all.

On came the rolling dust, the four horses, the driver, the messenger, and the passengers. They must have passed by Rudy's little house; perhaps Rudy had been looking out at them. Well, the fools need not be hurt—it is only to march to the music.

The man bent one leg and rested upon his knee to readjust the hot, black mask that covered his face. He peered down the road again.

The coach must be half up the last slope. It was out of sight, but the snap of the whip came to his ears as a signal.

"Betty," he whispered close to the barrel, and got on his feet.

Against the trunk of the dusty oak a man crouched, with his finger on the trigger of a gun. A stage-coach rocked into view with two men, a pale little woman, and a messenger, who sat on the box.

"Halt."

The horses came back on their haunches, Betty's steel-rimmed mouth had covered them all.

"Throw out your express box and unload your passengers."

Three men and a woman lined along the roadside with their hands to the sky, and a green, brass-handled box lay in the dust.

"Out with your horses, my hearty, and line up."

The nerve of one man can undo the natural and customary method of four of his fellows. The driver took his team to the rear of his passengers, and Billy stepped to the front with Betty as steady as became a woman-of-war.

He ran his eye over the men. It would be time to release the woman when danger was past.

"Fall to on that box," Billy directed. He signalled a man of generous build and ample manner, but the gentleman seemed reluctant to obey.

"One," said Billy. "Two—"

But the man was in the middle of the road, willing and toolless. An axe was dragged from the coach, and he sent the hot fury of his anger into the strokes of the steel.

"Cut the mail pouches," came the next order, and the

Digitized by Google

messenger writhed under cover as he ripped with his knife.

At that moment fell the certain distant sound of approaching horses. Heaven knows there was need of haste, and Billy emphasised the vigour of his threats with oaths.

Sweat fell from the men as he turned to the woman.

"Into the—" Billy began,—and Rudy was looking up at him!

Rudy with face like chalk, and her heart broken and bleeding.

Heavens! There is one thing no man can face—the faith of a woman struck back into her heart!

Billy and the revolver wavered, and the messenger sprang to his feet.

"Get him," he cried, and his bullet went wide of the mark.

Confusion ensued in a moment. Men's hands leapt to their pockets for weapons and signalled the team coming up.

Billy wasted nothing of the aid Betty held for him. He plunged into the brush at the east with his brain and his heart in the thrall of his shock. About him crashed and split a rain of bullets, and he knew there were many of them ready to follow him on the spot

He swore himself into energy, and beat on through the thick, thorny underbush with the hope of their disorder sustaining him. There was a small stone corral someone had told him of—Rudy had told him of! It was hemmed in with rocks and chapparral. For a theatre of war it was safest for the man inside it and there was only one approach! Rudy had once found herb roots there.

He turned sharp to the south and trailed back again, conscious that his scent was strong and his arm true, and woe to the men who had lived peaceful lives in the fields of their country!

Wet drops of something warm trickled down his back. There must be a wound there. Billy forced his way along, cutting through tangles, leaping the rocks, and scaling the boulders, only halting for a second to separate insect noises from that of the hunt of men. If he could reach his corral there would be at least breathing space for further campaigning. They were after him, hot on his trail, he knew.

The long, slim shadows of the late afternoon had been swallowed in the monotone of twilight when Billy Owen sat on his heels behind the walls of a stone corral on the sheer slope of a Sierra hill. The inflammation of his wound was racking his head, but the keenest pain he suffered was not from that.

And there could be no moment of time given over to the undisturbed thought of it.

His senses were preternaturally alert; they made time record of the night-miller's winging and the life of the lizards in the wall at his face. The red leaves of a poison-oak vine served as his shelter, and above this, and about it, and beyond it the chapparal, and the pines.

From behind the mass of summer foliage the eyes of a man and the mouth of a gun were at aim and waiting.

But it was Rudy's face that was searing with fire the brain of the man—Rudy's face, which had only known love for him, and trust in him, and pride of him. It went over him cold that her scorn of him might set them on his track. She might guess what he would make for. They had laughed at it as a robber resort. But the thought could not live. Rudy's womanliness——

Hark! There could be no mistake—a step! He had been waiting hours for it. It could come. He needed no change of movement to send it into silence. There would be more of them behind. There must be no delay in wiping them out.

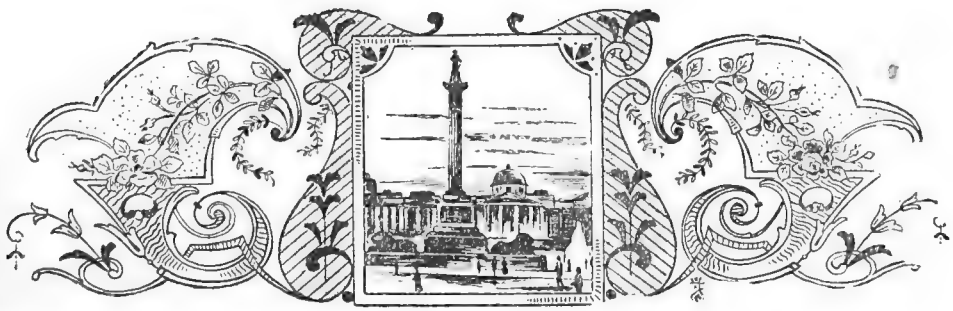
There it comes again, on and up. The fool! Does he think his life is worth juggling for? An unlodged stone trips jerkily down the hillside, and some bats blacken the air over his head. Betty is so safe, and so sure, and so ready that he will let the idiot come into her face.

A hand shows through the bushes at the gate of the corral. Billy is forced to turn; it is someone who knows the run of the land. A black figure thrusts through the branches and Betty throws out her ball of death.

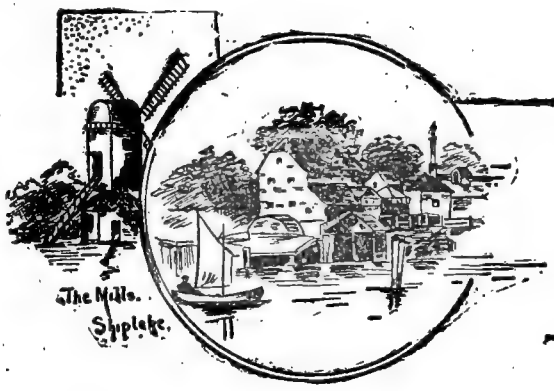
"Billy," he heard in its last terrible note of misunderstanding.

He sits in the open and holds her in his arms. Her black hair hangs over her face, and he thrusts it back to clasp her against his breast, against his lips.

At midnight they find Billy Owen, the bandit. There is a woman in his arms, and their lives have gone out on a common search.



Digitized by Google



In the Dark.

BLIND men, however sharpened their remaining senses may become, would not exactly be selected as the fittest agents for the purpose in which I once found myself engaged. Still there is no knowing to what they may have to put their wits; and, although I have no pretentions to being sharper than the rest of my fellow-sufferers, yet there is no doubt that when one has to rely very persistently on all one's faculties in order to keep fairly abreast of ordinary mortals, it is wonderful how quick the apprehension and the power of drawing conclusions become.

You are not concerned with the history of my infirmity—how I lost my sight and so forth—it is enough for the present purpose if I say that I have been blind for some twenty years—that I have grown quite accustomed and reconciled to my fate, and, without making light of it, have ceased to think about it or regard it as interfering materially with the ordinary conduct of daily life.

Very well, then. I chanced some three years ago to be staying with some friends in their country house—not very far from London, nevertheless situated in a delightfully rural and secluded district. My host and hostess lived in good style, kept much company and entertained in munificent fashion. Most of their friends, too, were wealthy, and the jewellery, as I was told, which occasionally sparkled within those hospitable walls, represented vast sums of money. It was a thoroughly easy-going establishment. Meals were made movable feasts to suit the varied arrangements, which a constant programme of amusement entailed.

The month was August, the weather was fine and hot, and on the particular evening in question it so happened that dinner was to partake of a character of a late supper, to suit the convenience of the house party, who were going to make a picnic excursion on the neighbouring Thames, and meant to stay on the water until nearly midnight.

Now, I did not join them for two reasons—firstly, because I wanted to enjoy the quiet and peace of the house, gardens, and shrubberies, when entirely deserted; secondly, because, always a bad sleeper, I had been more than usually wakeful for some nights, and I determined to go to bed early and to take a certain narcotic, which had been recommended as quite harmless and exceedingly pleasant. It consisted of a powder, and the directions said it was to be mixed with a pint bottle of light claret, a glass or two of which might be taken on going to bed, or in the course of the night if occasion required.

Early in the evening I secured the wine from the butler, and myself mixed it with the drug by simply shooting the latter dexterously in the bottle. Then I shook it, corked it, and stood it on the bed-table with a large claret glass, to be ready for use when I retired for the night.

This I did, as I proposed, a little before ten, at which time I was the sole occupant of the house, with the exception of the servants. Their quarters, with kitchens, lay at the extreme opposite wing from that in which my bedroom was situated.

Thus, as I crept up the main staircase, with the aid of my stick, and by feeling the well-known landmarks by which I am always able to guide myself after very little practice along passages and corridors, my foo steps echoed strangely, and I was conscious that an unusual air of solitude pervaded the place. Of course, the twilight had faded into night by this time, but that made no difference to me, and naturally I carried no candle.

Somehow, nevertheless, I had a strange feeling of not quite liking the solitude—a sensation akin to nervousness I suppose it would be called. Unaccustomed to regard myself as a coward, I could have wished that the house had not seemed quite so lonely. It was a vague, vain, and ridiculous idea, I knew; still, the nearer I got to my room, the more it possessed me.

When I laid my hand on the lock, for a moment it quite overwhelmed me, and I need hardly say that when I found the door resist my effort to open it, my discomfiture was complete. Then after a moment I pulled myself together, feeling heartily ashamed of the rapidity with which my heart was beating. Another push at the door, and it opened partially—enough to admit me. Something had fallen inside and blocked it.

I stooped to discover what it was, and presently my fingers lighted on a wedge-shaped block of wood with a screw sticking partially through it. This had caused the jam. But what could it be? However, I left it on the floor, closed the door and walked slowly towards the window, knowing every step of the way.

The window—a French one opening on to a small balcony—to my surprise was not closed, as I was certain I had left it an hour or two earlier, when I brought up the wine to my room. You might think these little discoveries would have increased my nervousness. They had a contrary effect; at least every sensation was swallowed up in surprise and curiosity as to what could have happened.

However, I began slowly to undress. A blind man has to do most mechanical things slowly, if he would not be perpetually bruising or maiming himself, and so I went on for a few minutes fumbling about with my

garments as usual, depositing each in its accustomed place, for only by that means are we incapables able to find any object with certainty again.

Suddenly I thought of the purpose which had brought me to bed so early, and began to doubt if I was going through a good preparation for giving the sleeping draught a fair chance. I had grown wider and wider awake every moment from that when, ascending the stairs, I had first felt a sense of loneliness. Nevertheless, I determined to take a glass of my light claret forthwith, considering that by the time I should be getting into bed it would be beginning to take effect.

I stepped out in the direction of the table where it stood, felt about for an instant, and the next had the bottle within my grasp. Then I found the glass, and was proceeding as I expected, to take the cork out, when lo! there was no cork. Raising the bottle, I instantly knew from its lightness that it was empty.

This discovery was conclusive.

Somebody had been in the room—perhaps was in the room at this moment—a most unpleasant notion, but I was no longer nervous.

"Who is there?—speak!" I cried. "Who are you, and where are you?"

No reply. I listened intently; not a sound broke the stillness of the sweet still night. Taking my stick, I thrust it under the bed and round about in various corners of the room. The furniture appeared a little disarranged but otherwise there was no evidence of the presence of any human being. Very strange, I thought. Anyway, I must ring for the footman—for I may say here that I dislike being valeted, and beyond indispensable assistance, prefer doing everything as much as I can for myself, especially in my bedroom.

As my hand passed across the corner of the table it knocked something off on to the ground which rattled like tin and glass. Not stopping to investigate, the next discovery my sensitive fingers made on the table was some short iron tool. I took it up and felt it, but could not make out what it was, so proceeded to grope for the bell-rope.

Now, with all that had gone before, imagine my sensations when, as my fingers passed over the edge of the pillow on the way to the top of the bedstead, they fell upon a warm human cheek. Yes; the cheek of a man, as I knew instantaneously from his sparse whiskers.

Imagine my sensations, I say at that moment.

That I was startled beyond expression I admit; but I checked my impulse to shout aloud. I stepped back into the middle of the room, bumping against a chair or something in my haste. In two seconds, however, I had collected my wits. Quick as thought, almost, I drew my conclusions and settled what to do.

I went to the window, closed and fastened it as securely and as noiselessly as I could, for I had no desire to disturb the intruder, who, so far, except for the warmth of his flesh, showed no sign of life—my quick ears told me that. I stood still for a moment listening and could not even hear him breathe.

Then I crept to the door, felt for the key, which had been, I knew, inside, but it was no longer in the lock. By great good luck, just as I was debating how I might secure the door on the outside, my foot trod on what I knew to be the key. It was lying close to that bit of wood with the screw which had first attracted my attention.

I now guessed that it was a wedge that had been placed in the crack between door and floor; but so carelessly that it had yielded to my pressure. So, picking it up with the key, I passed out into the passage and softly closed and locked the door after me.

At least, I thought, whoever you are, you shan't get out this way. Then I made what haste I could along the corridor and down the stairs, rang the dining-room bell, and in a few minutes had told my story to the butler.

He was for immediately rushing upstairs to see about it all.

"No, no, Pitts," said I, "wait a bit. Call two of the footmen, and let them take up a position where they can see that no one leaves the room. Go out and get hold of two or three gardeners—anybody, and post them under the window. Then start off somebody from the stable to the village for the constable—for two constables, if there are two. Now, quick's the word. The fellow is sound asleep, whoever he is; but we may as well make sure of him."

These orders were rapidly carried out, and in less than half an hour two stalwart policemen arrived. One joined the men under the window, the second, the head constable, went upstairs with the butler and myself. He was the first to enter the room. I slipped in to listen.

"Hullo, my man, what are you up to here? Come, wake up; give an account of yourself."

A pause.

"Why he is as sound as a top still."

A noise as of shaking something; another pause.

"Oh yes, of course, here's a nice little game; dark lantern rolled over on the floor, jimmy and crowbar, box of noiseless matches, and all the rest of it, I see. Here you, wake up. This 'ere kidding won't wash; get up and come along with me quietly." Another shaking.

"Oh you won't, won't you? Hullo, what's this? Oh indeed; armed, ay? Yes, a six-shooter in your breast pocket. Fully loaded too, no doubt. We'll see to that a bit later. Ah! and a knuckle-duster too, by jig! You are an ugly customer and no mistake, you are. What a lucky thing you're so sound asleep,—to-o-o be sure; and I'll make sure of you, my friend, while I've got the chance, anyhow. These 'ere bracelets will fit you like gloves."

A pause again, a little fumbling, followed by the audible click of the handcuffs.

"Call up my mate, sir, will you please?" This, no doubt, to the butler, who, going to the window and opening it, shouted to the man below, who soon entered the room. Then I could guess pretty well from the sound what they did, which, of course, was to lug the fellow off the bed, thinking that would wake him; but although he fell on the floor with a heavy thud, it appeared to do nothing of the kind.

Then the thought suddenly flashed through my mind that he had drunk, deeply, no doubt, of my particular brew, and remembering that the bottle was empty, I trembled lest, having taken half a dozen doses of the fascinating mixture at once, he might never recover from his sleep. So stepping forward I stated my surmise as to what had happened, and said: "You had better send for a doctor immediately."

"Well, p'raps so, sir," agreed the constable; "it would be best anyways, for he's about as heavy a bit of goods to move as I've come across for a long while."

Then they laid the burglar on the floor, propped up his head, and left him in charge of the officers till the

doctor arrived. He did so just as my hosts and their friends returned from their excurson, and you may judge of the excitement that followed throughout the household.

The medical man, after due examination, and suggesting certain douches of cold water, reassured us all with the statement that he would not die. My assumption as to the cause of his coma was so feasible as not to admit of dispute. Doubtless by aid of his dark lantern he saw the bottle of wine with its label announcing it to be Medoc of the first quality. Tasting and trying, and finding it to be a light and agreeable fluid, he drained the bottle at a gulp, probably as the first step towards giving him the necessary courage and strength to proceed with the business of the night.

In this he was probably interrupted by the rapid action of the excessive dose, and feeling suddenly overcome by a drowsy stupor, had staggered to the bed and thrown himself helplessly upon it. The fellow had entered the room, of course, by the balcony, having hauled himself up with a rope to which was attached a hook, and which was discovered with the remaining tools of his fascinating craft.

At the expiration of some three or four hours, and in the dead of night, he recovered sufficient consciousness to stand up, and he was then marched off between the two constables, locked up, and eventually punished according to law.

"On the whole," said the doctor to me later on, when we were laughing over the adventure, "on the whole, sir, it is a good thing for you that you tried the effect of the narcotic on some one else. Take my advice, sir, and don't resort to narcotics; they are always dangerous, and that must have been especially so. The drug clearly was a very powerful one.

"You have had a lucky escape in every way, for if you had come into conflict with that gentleman—remembering how he was prepared—I am afraid he would have left his mark on you; whereas you have turned the tables and, after a fashion, left yours on him.

"I wish the law would help you to make it indelible on his back with a good round dozen of the cat. It is the only way to put a stop to this armed business; it is the only thing these rascals dread.

"However, he will give blind men a wide berth for the future, I prophesy, now that he has found one of them such a capital thief-taker."

B. Robins.

A Clinical Lecture.

Accompanied by a number of students, who each morning attended his clinical conferences, Dr. Maurice de Vellin gravely advanced into the wards of the Lariboisière Hospital.

Young, hardly in his fortieth year, but already one of the most influential members of the medical faculty of Paris, Dr. de Vellin impressed one as being a man of extreme severity, yet capable of the utmost gentleness. He spoke concisely, and his large dark eyes, keenly observant, had an indefinable expression of profound reverie.

Not through his wealth, but by working unceasingly and through his intellectual gifts, he had gained all the degrees obtainable in his profession. Without relaxation, he, rung by rung, had climbed the scientific ladder from the rôle of simple student to the honourable title of Professor of the Medical Faculty and Member of the Institute. As brave as intelligent, he had been awarded on the field of honour the red rosette that ornamented the lapel of his frock-coat.

Dr. de Vellin was an acknowledged savant, but of a modest disposition that bordered on timidity. He lived alone in a small though luxurious apartment, having as companion an old servant who had served his family for many years. Although considered strange and eccentric by the staff and inmates of the hospital, Dr. de Vellin was neither strange nor eccentric, but a deep thinker whose existence had been influenced by some mysterious sorrow.

On either side of the large ward, small iron cots were placed in a military row, the curtains giving to the ward a festive appearance—if it were possible for a ward in a hospital to have a seeming gaiety.

At each cot the master and his pupils remained a few minutes. Here a word of consolation, there a word of cheer; but frequently away from the sufferers, the physician would dart a glance to the students, the expression indicating that Heaven alone could heal where science had exhausted all its resources.

And these sufferers, like dying warriors who had fought bravely, yet still striving to prolong the inevitable end, eagerly and hungrily grasped and cherished the slightest word of hope. How their eyes lingered on the troop of doctors and students as they quitted the ward.

They passed into one of the women's wards.

"Have you any new cases?" asked the physician of the attendant.

"A young girl. Picked up by the ambulance last night. Breathing with great difficulty and in a very high fever. We diagnosed the case as congestion of the lungs, and having not had the time to make a complete

examination of the subject, we beg you to make it in our presence."

The physician nodded acquiescently and inquired:

"Which bed?"

"The one occupied yesterday by the typhoid fever patient, whose autopsy we made this morning, No. 27." Dr. de Vellin approached the cot named, and drawing aside the spotless curtains saw lying before him a young girl.

Perhaps she was one of those beings from whom misery and suffering had so mercilessly ravished the lustre of beauty and the charm of youth. It was a beautiful face had it not been marred by an excessive pallidity which was intensified by contrast with the heavy ebony hair that framed it.

The fire of her bistre eyes had long been extinct; her pale lips too had long ceased to frame piteous words; her colourless cheeks had lost their childish roundness; her breast heaved and fell faintly and at each breath her now attenuated but finely moulded body became rigid with the pain which even this slight respiration caused her.

On perceiving the physician the girl stirred and raised herself, but the effort brought from her lips a thin stream of blood and powerless she sank back upon the pillow.

After making the anscultation, Dr. de Villen confirmed the diagnosis of the attendant and added:

"The last stage; you know what you have to do." He turned to leave but suddenly turning addressed the girl.

"What age are you, my child?"

"Seventeen," she replied almost inaudibly.

"Seventeen!" he repeated, in a pitying undertone. "And what is your name?"

"Mathilde."

Was it the reflection of the curtains that caused the sudden pallor on the physician's face?

"Yes—yes, but your family name."

"Alas! Monsieur, my mother is dead. She embraced me when I was eight years of age for the last time."

"Of what did your mother die?"

"Ah! her story is only like so many of the poor little working-girls of Paris. She met one day a young man above her in birth and education. With him she spent many joyous months; but her babe had been cradled in her arms a short, short time when he abandoned both, and a few years after my mother died from grief and misery."

"And your father——?"

"My father? I have never seen him. He was a medical student and deceived my mother, even when he promised marriage."

The physician motioned the students to withdraw to a little distance, while he bent over the girl as if the words which fell from her lips were too precious to lose.

"Yes, monsieur, and notwithstanding his cruelty my mother told me to respect his memory always."

Dr. de Vellin passed his hand over his cold and damp forehead. Then slowly, seeming to weigh and realise the import of each one of his words, and searching his most sacred, innermost thoughts, he said:

"You are seventeen, you say. This is the year 186—*then*, 185—seventeen years ago—I—I was—in——Your mother, her name!"

The physician's trembling hand clenched and crushed the curtains, while he huskily repeated:

"Her name! Her name!"

"Mathilde Vanier, like mine, and like her, I have known misery and hunger, and from hunger—shame!"

* * * * *

The students saw a man's bowed form beside the little cot and wondered.

Two small delicate hands were outstretched suppliantly, but the arms refused their support and they fell white and cold upon the clasped ones over the man's face that was pressed against the cot.

At the touch of those poor hands he raised his haggard face. Each saw their eyes reflected as in a mirror, as they for that instant gazed at each other. The students saw and again wondered. The girl feebly raised herself, then fell forward.

A stream of blood rushed from her lips on to the side of the cot, dyeing the physician's fingers with its colour as it dripped into a pool on the floor. Uttering a cry he clasped the inanimate body in his arms, pressing it against his own, as if wanting to impart to this slender form the strength and life of his, while he passionately uttered:

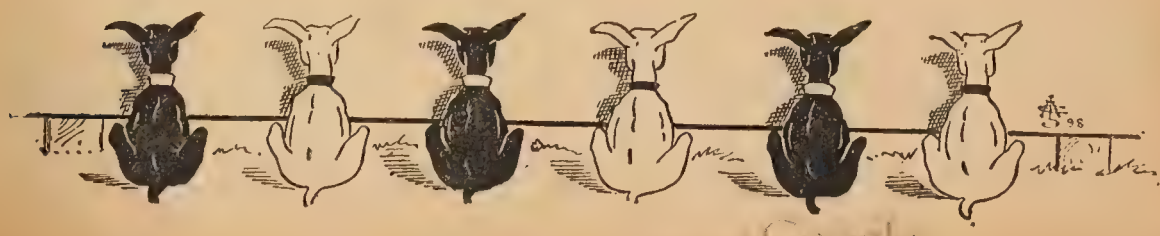
"No, you must not die—no—no—Mathilde, Mathilde—my——"

Suddenly thrusting the corpse from him, he recoiled. His bloodshot eyes wandered from his stained hands to the pool on the floor, from the pool to the dead girl, and again to his hands. He shivered like one bitterly cold—smiled—flung back his grand head, then a harsh, piercing, ferocious—horrible laugh rang through the ward.

* * * * *

Dr. Maurice de Vellin was mad!

B. de Tehain.



TOLD IN THE GLOAMING.

RAY STANNARD was at supper with his pretty wife Isobel. It was a wholesome and plentiful meal, for Isobel, although out of active culinary practice—she was a highly expert stenographer when Stannard wooed and won her—still showed that her early training was not of an ephemeral type.

It was a nice supper in a nice, cosy room, with a remarkably nice young woman on the opposite side of the table, and yet Ray wore a discontented look.

"Same old ogre, dear?" asked Isobel, as she slowly filled his second cup.

"Yes," growled Ray, "and more ogerish than ever. Farnham was terribly out of sorts to-day. He cut and slashed the copy like a Malay running amuck. And I had such a beautiful story."

"Yes, dear," said Isobel, as she sympathetically put another muffin on his plate.

"Less than a column, too," continued Ray, "and how much do you suppose Farnham cut it down? To just twelve lines! I tell you it knocks every flicker of ambition clear out of a man."

"Too bad," sighed Isobel.

It was an old grievance with Ray and she knew it would do him good to talk himself out.

"Yes," he went on, "I felt like going in to the governor and saying: 'Here's an independent soul you can't put through your condemned old condensing crusher,' but of course I didn't do it. It would have been too expensive a luxury. Old Farnham can't help his share in it. He called me over to his desk this afternoon and said:

"'Why do you throw away your time and talent elaborating these stories? You ought to know by this time that they can't go. That stuff of yours to-day about the old man was clever, but the actual news in it was all contained in the few lines I left.'

"'Farnham,' I answered, 'you remember that story of Poe's where the ceiling slowly but surely descends upon the doomed wretch? Well, that's just the way I feel now. Condensing is squeezing all the ambition out of me.'

"Farnham laughed.

"'Cheer up,' said he. 'Perhaps some day you'll have a paper of your own.'

"'If I do,' I said, 'there'll not be a blue pencil within a mile of it.'

"But it's the same way every day. I can't throttle my fancy, I can't nail myself down to the cut-and-dried facts."

There was a brief pause. Ray finished his tea, shook out his napkin and pushed back his chair.

"Let us sit in the parlour a little while," said Isobel. "We don't want any light. It will be a sort of gloaming séance," and she laughed lightly.

So they sat in the little parlour. Ray in the great easy chair that Isobel had given him on his last birthday, and Isobel herself in her sewing rocker by the big bay window.

"Well, we must be thankful for one thing," Isobel said, with a restful little sigh, "and that is that you are not on a morning paper."

Ray heard her rummaging in her desk for a moment or two, and then the squeak of the little rocker began again.

"And now, dear," she continued, "I want to hear that good story that was so sadly disfigured by the naughty blue pencil. Tell it to me just as you wrote it, word for word. It mustn't be entirely wasted."

Ray was used to obeying, and, besides he was rather proud of his unmistakable story-telling talent. So, out of the depths of the great easy chair, his voice proudly arose.

It was a touching little story of a man whose idolised daughter had run away from her fine home to marry a worthless fellow.

Ray had interviewed her father, and now he told the tale in the father's own words, giving the very intonations of voice and the peculiar dialect of the somewhat illiterate old man. It was not an unusual story by any means, but Ray told it so well that he seemed to invest it with an original dignity.

"The white-haired father stood in the doorway," he said, "and with his hand shading his eyes, looked anxiously up and down the street. 'Perhaps,' he slowly said, 'what you're going to put in the paper will be read by Mabel. If 'tis, she'll know that the hands that took her from the arms of her dyin' mother are still stretched to take her agin—but not with him, not with him.'"

As Ray paused he noticed that the little rocker was still.

"And Farnham cut that down to twelve lines," he querulously said.

Google

He arose as he spoke and struck a match and lighted the big lamp on the centre table.

Isobel was standing by the desk with her face in the shadow. Then she turned and came forward.

"Why, Isobel," said Ray with swift tenderness, "you've been crying."

"It—it's the sudden glare of the lamp," she lamely explained. And Ray wondered afterward what could have so depressed her.

That was the beginning of a long series of in-the-gloaming conversations, as Isobel called them.

Every evening of the waning summer and early fall, they would sit in the cosy parlour for a half hour or so, and Isobel would draw Ray into talking over the events of the day. Sometimes there would be only a grist of trivial incidents.

And while he talked Isobel sat in the sewing rocker by the little desk, drumming lightly with her pencil and taking good care not to interrupt Ray as he lost himself in whatever he happened to be telling.

They were a great relaxation for him, these half-hour talks. They restored for a brief while his crushed vanity.

"I'm always sure of a select and sympathetic audience," he said with a boyish laugh.

And he improved, too, as a raconteur. He recognised the improvement, and so did Isobel.

They were no longer aimless little happenings that he told. They were dramatic sketches, full of strength and feeling.

Isobel met him one afternoon as he came from the office.

"Oh," she cried, "that was a beautiful story you told last night. It was even better than I thought it was."

"Eh," cried Ray, with a puzzled look. "You must have been brooding over it. What a memory you have!"

There was a heightened colour in Isobel's cheeks as she led the way to the table, but Ray didn't notice it. He was full of a new idea.

"Nixon called to me to-day as I passed his room," he said, "and asked me why I didn't go in for short story writing. My sketches showed that I had talent that way. It was a good deal for Nixon to say. I told him I had never thought of it. Anyway, I couldn't carry a story to completion. Brain fag and lack of industry would knock it out in no time. No, my dear, your handicapped Ray will continue to swing around the reportorial orbit and leave this story writing to the fellows with perseverance and a pull."

But Isobel only laughed.

So the summer passed and the autumn wore along, and, lo! Christmas was close at hand.

It would be the second Christmas day that Isobel and Ray had enjoyed together. It was Isobel who recalled the important fact.

"The other one was so closely mixed up with our honeymoon that it quite lost its identity," she said.

"Every day was Christmas with us then," sang Ray to a barbarous tune of his own invention.

It was the day before Christmas and Ray came home in a state of mild excitement.

"Two queer things happened at the office to-day," he said. "Just as I was leaving to-night old Nixon called to me as I passed. 'Hullo Ray,' he said, 'I see that you have found time,' and he winked at me in a most singular manner. 'Capital, too,' he shouted after me as I hurried along. What do you suppose he meant?"

Isobel was busy at the table and only shook her head.

"And then," continued Ray, "as I passed down the stairs I met Graham, our book reviewer, coming up, his arms overflowing with books as usual. It's rare indeed, that he ever nods to me, but this time he peered over his glasses and actually stopped.

"'It's Ray Stannard, isn't it?' he cried in his shrill voice. 'Glad to know you, sir. It's good, very good, indeed. I'm going to say so. A merry Christmas to you, Ray Stannard, and to Mrs. Stannard, and all the little Stannards,' and he chuckled and passed on."

"A very rude person," said Isobel with a red face. "What do you suppose he meant?"

"Haven't a blessed idea. He doesn't drink, so he's either getting queer, or he mistook me for somebody else. But it seemed funny, coming right on top of what Nixon said."

He paused and looked round.

"Did you——" he began, when Isobel interrupted him.

"Yes, yes," she cried, "they arrived all right. Such lovely chairs, and such a nice centre table! Just what we needed. Thank you so much, dear."

And then she thanked him in the good old way.

It was a pleasant little supper; so pleasant that Ray forgot all about the blue-pencil grievance.

When it was finished he leant back and laughingly asked:

"Do we enjoy the customary author's reading to-night?"

"No," said Isobel, "our holidays commence like the Jewish fast days at sundown. We will illuminate the reading room to-night for a change. Now wait, sir, while I light up."

She bustled into the parlour and presently called him.

The new centre table, flanked right and left by the new chairs, stood out in all its glory. Beside the lamp lay a square package.

Ray's gaze fell upon it.

"Your Christmas present, dear," murmured Isobel.

He tore off the wrapper impatiently.

"A book. That's fine," he said, as he drew a neat volume from its paper sheath and held it up.

"Wh-wh-what's this?" he quickly stammered:

BLUE-PENCIL STORIES.

By

Ray Stannard.

He was dazed.

"Why—what? You blessed angel, what does this mean?"

He skipped from page to page with eager eyes and trembling fingers.

"Yes, yes, they are mine, but I am sure I never wrote them."

"You told them, dear," said the triumphant Isobel. "You told them in the gloaming, you know, and I took them down word for word in shorthand. And the publisher liked them so much, and you are to have a royalty on every copy sold, and——"

"What?" cried Ray, "is that what those busy fingers were doing in the twilight? Why, Isobel, dear, you are crying again."

But they were only tears of joy, and it was a very happy author that kissed them away.

For the blue-pencil spook was laid for ever.

Gerald Hawton.

It was New Year's Eve. The room was very quiet; only the ticking of the old clock in the corner was numbering the last moments of the old year. The solemnity of the hour awed us. The lamp was burning very low, and the firelight flickered on the panels of the wall and lit up the strong, worn features of the old man who sat motionless in the chimney corner. Our dear old friend was of a great age now, and the dying year made us think sadly that we could hardly hope to have him with us much longer.

Suddenly the clock in the corner broke the silence with the jar and rattle of old-fashioned mechanism slowly striking the hour. The old man opened his eyes.

"Was that eleven it was striking?" he asked. "The old year dies hard. Like old age, it fain would check the few grains of sand that yet remain to run. This last hour of the old year," he went on, speaking more to himself than to us, "is a breathing space in life's journey; a resting place by the road from which we can survey the long white trail that lies behind us. It is well that the retrospect is not forced on us oftener, or we should lose courage to struggle on to our appointed goal. Our path is very crooked and very tortuous from the straight track the Great Engineer marked out for us. I see time behind me very erring, very wavering, but in the right direction—thank Heaven, in the right direction! Far away in the mists of the past a great shadow, as of the shadow of death, falls across it and the warning has helped to keep it straight. That is more than fifty years ago—fifty long years this very hour when the warning came."

His voice died away lost in memories. We kept very quiet, not to disturb his train of thought. We knew vaguely that he had a story. We had heard of a wild past in the hot blood of youth and of a fearful shock. He had never spoken of his youth, and we feared he would not now. At his great age his mind was so full of memories that one jostled the other aside before his words had half expressed it. I do not think that curiosity was our motive in wishing to hear his story; there is such a thing as sympathy which is very near akin to it.

Baby probably did not understand our feelings; but she clinched the matter for us. She climbed laboriously on to "granddad's" knee (he was no relation, but a friend of many years), and buried her curly head deep in his waistcoat, saying, "Tell baby pitty story!" Then she went fast asleep. He put his arm round her, and, looking up, saw inquiry writ large on our faces. He sighed.

"A story—yes: a story," he said. "Perhaps I had better tell it you now. This is the hour, and next year it may be too late, for no one else knows it. I am the last of my race: after me there will be neither kith nor kin to bear what was once a great name. The older line died out when Rake Tony, the friend of the Regent, was flung from his horse and borne a corpse to his mistress's feet.

"The younger line will be cut off root-and-branch in me, that the sins of the fathers may be avenged to the third and fourth generation. Still, the name of my house lives in history, and even now the memory of it brings a flush of pride to my cheek. In the old times the Torringtons were among the noblest in the land. Wherever honour was to be reaped in the stricken field our ancestors bore them nobly or returned home no more. Then a blight fell upon our race.

"Folk said it dated from the time when the fanatical old Puritan, the head of our house, gathered his crop-eared knaves on New Year's Eve to sweep the advancing Royalists from Stromsey Hollow. It was in those troublous times when Charles I. was king. Old Gideon Torrington thought to square his account with Heaven for a misspent youth by an old age of fanaticism. He may have been sincere in his intolerence, though men whispered that the gold of Parliament had more to do with old Fox's conversion than the communion of the Saints. Be this as it may, he became a traitor to his king, and hounded his eldest son, who remained loyal to the traditions of his house.

"They met the Cavaliers in the Stromsey Hollow, who, outnumbered as they were, fought long and well. Their leader was a gallant gentleman of courtly bearing though his features were masked. In the thick of the *mêlée* old Gideon was flung from his horse at the feet of the Cavalier leader. For one moment the starlight glittered on the Royalist's rapier at the old rebel's throat; then the hand that held it helped the fallen man to his feet. But fanaticism knows no chivalry.

"Scarcely had old Fox regained his feet when he drew a pistol and shot the man who had spared his life—shot him down from behind, showing that the chosen people should have no dealings with the Amalekites. Dismayed by the fall of their leader, some of his followers fled, leaving the others to die over his body.

"When the victors pulled the mask from the dead man's face old Fox saw the features of his eldest son. Even the Puritan bloodhounds fell back aghast: but their leader laughed in his dead son's face. 'If a father beget a son that hath done all these abominations, he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon his own head, as saith the prophet Ezekiel,' shouted the murderer.

"Despit his boast, a curse fell upon his house, his life knew no more peace, and even after death, on New Year's Eve—so the legend ran—his restless spirit haunts the scene of his crime even to this day.

"Since that day the Torringtons have closed a wild life by a violent death, and people of the country-side said that the race was doomed.

"If I heard the story in those days, I paid no heed to it. I had just come into the property inherited by us after my uncle's death. My parents died abroad, never claiming the title or the estate. I was living a fast life in London—wine, gambling. But what profit is there in raking among the ashes of a burnt-out folly? My acquaintances shook their heads and said that Dick Danvers was going the way of all the Torringtons at a faster pace than usual. They did not try to stop me. It was very merry while it lasted, and afterwards—well, they were not their brother's keeper. There was one, however, who did care, and he, at the eleventh hour, saved me from ruin of body and soul. It had come to that. Dissipation and debauch were leading on to crime; the sins of generation were demanding the wage of death. I was pausing on the brink of destruction before the final plunge; it was a turning-point in the broad and easy road.

"Towards the end of the year I received a letter from John Borough, begging me to come down to the old place. He was Rake Tony's foster-brother, and lived now as steward on the estate, trying to save the wreck the extravagance of its owners had made it. I accepted the invitation, though I could not analyse my motives for doing so, except that he was said to have been with my uncle till the last, and I was eager to hear of the man whom (all said) I resembled. I found him a stern, reserved old man, loyal to the memory of the past. He had heard of my wild life, and begged me to stop in time, though I laughed at him for his pains.

"Well! New Year's Eve came round, and we were sitting that night in gloomy silence before the fire in the halls when the sound of galloping hoofs on the high road roused us from our reverie. I was startled by the unexpected sound so late at night in that lonely part of the country, but more by its effect on Borough. He turned pale, and half fell on his knees, crying:

"'The vengeance of Heaven! Spare this one for his youth.'

"Then I remembered the legend which ran:

> "Torrington, Torrington, 'ware the hour
> When the Old and the New Year meet,
> And Stromsey Hollow cries for blood
> In the sound of passing feet.

"'Cheer up. The ghost has got to keep outside and I am going to stay in,' I said, sneering at his superstition. He took no notice of me.

"'The same sound,' he murmured, 'and I had hoped that Tony's blood had paid the debt.'

"'What has Tony got to do with it?' I asked, awed by his emotion.

"'Listen, boy,' he said, in a low, intense voice. 'That sound means death to the Torringtons. I only heard it once before and that was when the man I loved better than a brother was called to his account with all his sins thick upon his head. It was New Year's Eve, thirty years ago. Tony had come here from London unexpectedly, worn out and restless. He seemed to be waiting for something, half-hoping, half-fearing it would not come. Late at night he was sitting here before the fire, pouring out his heart to me. He told me he had fled from a great temptation that had beset him. He had escaped; but the danger had sobered him, and perhaps there was yet time for him to make atonement. While he was speaking a servant brought him in a note. As he read it his face turned pale. Then he tossed it over to me with a bitter laugh. The note was very short; the words are stamped on my memory.

"'"You left me basely"—it ran—"I too have left everything and followed you. By your plighted word come to me to-night."

"'Never mind now what it meant. It is a story of guilty passion, of broken trust, of a hospitable hearth dishonoured.

"'It was dated from the inn at Haston. You know the village that lies on the high road a mile from Stromsey Hollow. I trembled, though I did attempt to dissuade him. "His honour rooted in dishonour stood."

"'He shouted for his horse. "And saddle mine, too," I ordered. He turned round and grasped my hand.

"'"Thanks, John," he whispered. "You warned me; but you stick to me in the hour of need."

"'We were soon riding hard through the park. At the great stone gates he drew rein, and looked back once more at the old house.

"'"The last of us is leaving," he murmured, "perhaps to make atonement for the past."

"'The night was clear and frosty, and the stars were wonderfully bright.

"'We rode in silence.

"'His face was very pale, and I thought his lips were moving.

"'At length we entered the Hollow. All was silent there and very dark, for the trees met over our heads on either side. It was a desolate spot a dan ill-omened, and—for my phantasy was strangely excited—alive with noiseless, moving forms. The air seemed danker and more chilly, while the wind sighed mournfully in the branches. We rode on steadily round the turning where an open track of road lay white and deserted before. It must have been close on midnigh when we reached the end of the Hollow. Of a sudden the sound of those galloping hoofs struck our ears. Clear and sharp they sounded, coming towards us over the frost-bound road. Our horses plunged in fright, trembling all over. Tony all but lost his seat.

"'"What is this?" he whispered to me hoarsely; "don't you see that cloaked figure with its pale, grinning face, riding down on us?"

"'I peered over the deserted road. I could see nothing—nothing but the waving shadows and the pale moonlight—while the horror of the advancing hoofs sounded nearer and nearer.

"'"Man or devil," cried Tony, "he shall stand me answer," and wrenched his startled horse across the road.

"'Then came the whirl of a great rush and a thunder of hoofs.

Digitized by Google

"'My horse shied madly, and I knew no more, for I was thrown heavily and lay unconscious by the roadside. I was told later how Haston at midnight heard the charge of a runaway horse dashing up the village street. Some men rushed out and stopped it.

"'Dragged by the stirrup, disfigured and covered with blood, they found what had been Anthony, Lord Torrington. Reverently they raised the shattered corpse, and bore it to the inn, where a woman was waiting to receive it with maniac laughter.'

"John Borough finished his story, and sat silent with his face buried in his hands. I, too, sat silent, thinking deeply. Tony's fate moved me strangely, as I pondered over the similarity between our lives. We both had lived vicious, purposeless lives; we both of us had to answer for a heritage of sin.

"His fate had overtaken him, sudden and terrible; the warning of its approach had come to me. His repentance had been too tardy—too late to stay the phantom of evil overshadowing our race. Had my hour of grace also passed? The thought maddened me.

"I was doomed to go on leading my worthless life; bitter though it had become now, I had drained the cup of pleasure to the dregs, while a relentless Nemesis was hounding me to my death. This grisly spectre of sin had hunted us to the grave from father to son, and would not rest till the last of our race had paid the debt. Better to put my fortune to test and face the monster boldly, as Tony had done, than to live with this doom hanging over my head.

"If contrition would avail aught the horror would be powerless over me now as in years to come; but if nothing could atone for the past, let me meet my punishment like a man. Now was the appointed time; now let the die be cast. Mastered by this resolve, I rose to leave the room My companion started to his feet.

"'What are you going to do?' he cried; and, from the apprehension in his eyes, I knew he had divined my purpose.

"'Old friend,' I answered, 'you yourself have seen that none of our race can escape his doom. Certainty is better than this purgatory of doubt. Do not gainsay me.'

"He bowed his head.

"'Boy, you are of another branch,' he said, 'the evil spirit of the elder race may have no power over you.'

"'Then let me put the issue to the test,' I cried. 'Sooner death itself than the impending horror of the future.'

"Together we went out to the stables and saddled our horses. At the last I begged him to suffer me to meet this danger alone.

"'I was with Tony until the end,' he said simply; and I protested no more. How well I remember that ride along the lonely road under the silent stars in the tingling air! I knew that I might be riding to my death; yet never had I felt more full of life. Every turning of the road might bring me closer to my doom; yet I hurried on faster still.

"All nature was so still and peaceful that my errand seemed but the outcome of disturbed imagination. I almost imagined I was being fooled by a legend and the nightmare of a dreamer. Then we entered the gloom of Stromsey Hollow. The mystery and associations of the spot fell upon my spirits as a chill. I recognised the weird sighing of the wind, the flitting shadows, the dank air that John Borrough had described; and it needed all my resolution not to turn my horse's head and fly. My companion was riding close to my bridle arm, silent and lost in thought.

"When we passed the turning, and saw the long white stretch of road lying before us, he touched my arm.

"'This is the spot,' he said. 'There he stood. Have you the courage—or better turn while there is yet time.'

"I dismounted and flung my reins to him. I thought it would be foolhardy to risk my life on a frightened horse. Then I went and stood with folded arms in the middle of the hollow. I looked round at my companion. He, too, had left the saddle, and was standing by the roadside holding the horses' heads. I thought his face was strangely bright and hopeful and wondered vaguely what the reason of his comfort might be. How long I stood there I cannot tell. Every nerve in my body was tingling, every sense strained to painful tension. I heard nothing save the low whispering of the wind; saw nothing save wavering shadows over the moonlit road.

"At times I was so calm as almost to laugh at my mad errand; at others, the expectancy was so tense as nearly to madden me. Then, all in a moment, a chill breeze sprang up. My courage left me, and I trembled violently, for sharp and clear along the hard road rang the hurrying hoofs of an approaching horse. The sound did not strike my ears by degrees; it rang out abrupt and sudden. I strained my eyes in terror; I could see nothing. Closer and closer the gallop sounded, coming straight at me, as if the phantom horseman would ride down anything that was in his path. In a moment he was thundering down on me; I shut my eyes and tried to force my lips to prayer.

"Then came that fearful rush as of something flying past; the terrified neighing and trampling of our frightened horses, and a stifled groan. I must have swooned, for I lost consciousness and fell headlong on the road.

"When I recovered my senses all was still and peaceful as before; but by the roadside lay John Borough, cold in death, killed by a kick of his frightened horse. Perhaps the mystery of his birth was explained by his death; perhaps he was the last of the elder branch."

When the old man had stopped speaking we looked round at each other with an obviously forced smile on our faces. We saw that each of us was trying to talk of imagination and natural phenomena, and that the words stuck in the throat.

Just then the clock with elaborate effort wheezed out midnight, and the chimes rang through the frosty air. Baby woke, and crowed her "Happy New Year," kissing the old man vigorously. We followed baby's example; but our merriment was more subdued and forced than usual, for we were thinking of many things.

James Warburton.

In childhood days we played together;
I kept a shop, she came to buy;
Sometimes I was her little husband
And she would cook and make mud pie.

Ah! that was long ago and many
A country have I wandered through
To-day she's married to another
And settled down and happy, too.

Last night they had me in to dinner,
I ate a piece of pie she made—
She knows no more about pie making
Then she did when we, as children, played.

THE RED MEN OF THE DUSK

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ROMANCE.

By JOHN FINNEMORE.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Memorable Evening.

When the horses were made snug, William went back to the house and I followed him. He led me through a short passage into a spacious keeping room and seated me by a cheerful wood fire. The room was empty when we entered, but, in a moment, an old woman, his wife, came in and held some conversation with him. From it I gathered that a clergyman was expected soon to visit Mistress Whitgift.

Twenty minutes later a light knock came at the door and someone arrived.

"The parson," thought I, and wondered if he would come in my way. Ten to one I should know him so near home as I was.

Know him! He walked into the kitchen and I almost shouted. Doctor Willingham, Anthony Willingham, our own Doctor whom I had heard preaching steadily away in Butley church for an hour on end many and many a time.

I was ready to cry out for sheer pleasure at the sight of his cheerful, red face, grey hair, and big, silver spectacles. But I restrained myself, and resolved to test my disguise. He, alas, was in like case, for his dress bore no token of his sacred office and was that of an unprosperous drover. I had not known of late where he was, for a stauncher Royalist never breathed and he had been driven from his rectory at Butley long ago and wandered at large among the Cavalier houses of Worcestershire.

He stopped and whispered to the old man, his eye on me. When he had learnt who I was he came forward. I stood up, scraped a rude bow, and offered to draw back from the fire.

"No, no, my man," said the Doctor, "keep thy seat, my good fellow. Yonder heap of oak billets will suffice to warm us two, without one retiring."

I sank down again on the settle, and he seated himself in a tall-backed chair opposite and looked at me thoughtfully.

"Dost thou use the English tongue, my friend?" asked Doctor Willingham.

"Yes, your reverence," I returned, disguising my voice as well as I could, "I speak a little English."

"That is lucky," he replied, "for the old fellow who used to march with that young lady had never a word, and I should be glad to ask thee a few questions."

"I will do your pleasure in all I can," said I.

"Ay, ay, honestly said," returned Doctor Willingham, beaming on me through his great shining spectacles.

"Has there ever a stranger arrived at Sir Arthur Vaughan's house of late?"

"There have been many strangers," I answered.

"The one I speak of," pursued he, "is a tall, straight, handsome young man, well dressed, and well mounted. Your master would call him nephew."

"Oh," said I, "you speak of Master Geoffrey Heathcote, of Butley Croft."

"I do, I do," cried Doctor Wellingham, eagerly. "Then he arrived safely among the Welsh hills?"

"He did," I answered.

"The Lord be praised for it!" cried the good old man. "I felt sure the lad had gone that way. And is yonder a sure place of refuge?"

"Better could not be," said I. "It is a wild tangle of hills which few can thread."

"Ay, ay," said the Doctor, and clapped his knee for joy.

I was perfectly satisfied with my experiment. He seemed to have no suspicion but that he was talking with a genuine serving-man, and to have deceived the man who had christened me and taught me the Catechism left me in an easy state of mind as regards other people.

"And he was safe and well when your party left home?"

"He was and is, my dear old friend," I replied in my natural voice.

Digitized by Google

Dr. Willingham started and looked fixedly at me. I leaned forward and laid my hand upon his knee.

"Doctor," said I, "forgive me playing with you, as it seemed, but I was anxious to test my disguise I have had no opportunity to do so before, and I am satisfied now."

"My lad, my lad, my dear Geoff," cried he. "And is it you? And here? Why have you left your safe hiding place, and what do you do here in the midst of danger? And how did you come by that hurt upon your face."

"False," said I. "There is nothing under the patch." The Doctor held me by the hands which he shook again and again, then patted my shoulder, just as he did when I was a boy, next took huge pinches of snuff, and was together in a state of great excitement and wonder, at once delighted and fearful to see me there.

"Tell me everything," he said, "and I will advise you to the best of my ability."

"It is just what I wish to do," said I, and plunged at once into my story. For details I had neither time nor fancy, and in ten minutes I had put him in complete possession of the heads of my doings since I fled from Butley Croft.

I had just finished, and he was thoughtfully polishing his spectacles and ruminating upon my story, when the old man of the house came in.

Doctor Willingham looked up, and the old man spoke.

"My mistress would like to see your reverence now."

"Yes, William," he replied, "I will come at once."

He turned to me. "My duty calls me away for the moment, Geoffrey," said he, "but we shall have an opportunity of conversing upon these matters later."

He went away, the old man followed him, and I was left alone. A few minutes passed, and the door opened again. I looked up and saw Enid enter the room. Springing up, I hastened to her and took her in my arms to kiss away the tears which were falling fast.

"Oh, she is weak, very weak," said Enid, "and I fear I have done wrong in coming to distress her. She is so troubled because——"

"Because she fears she cannot render you the help you need." Enid made a gesture of assent.

"I have told her everything," whispered Enid, "She insisted, feeble that she is, on my telling her all that had happened."

The latch clicked, and we started apart, mistress and servant again. It was only Siani, however, followed in a moment by William.

The latter, helped by Siani, set out food, and we sat down at a long table, my love being placed at the top with a table cloth before her, and I at the bottom with my dish on the bare oak.

"Nay, William," said she, when she observed how the old man was marshalling us. "This is not a serving-man, as old Gwilym was. He is a gentleman, and must sit near me."

"Oh," said William, "Under a cloud, eh? My respects to the gentleman," he continued, turning a sad eye on me, "but there folk in this village who might come to this house at any minute, and trouble might hap for him were he suspected."

Upon this hint we remained as we were, and the meal was swiftly made. Enid disappeared again, Siani began to clear away the supper dishes, and the old man came and stood opposite to me in the chimney corner to which I had returned.

"My friend," said I, "who are the people in the village whom you fear?"

"Why, master," said William, "you'll like them no better than me if you be what I expect—a gentleman in trouble for the good cause."

"I am," said I.

"Why, there," he said, "then mind for yourself. The present owner of the Whitgift estates is my late master's cousin, a bitter Parliament man. No sooner is the breath out of my mistress's body, than this house is his. He has heard that she is very ill and come to the point of the death, and at this very moment, his attorney is waiting at the village inn to take possession."

This was a piece of news indeed. I, of all people, had no itching for a close acquaintance with an unfriendly lawyer, and, upon William's moving away, I stared into the fire, and mused over the situation.

I heard my name called and looked up. Doctor Willingham stood in the doorway, beckoning me. His face was very grave.

"Mistress Whitgift wishes to see you," he said.

I followed him at once and he led the way to the room where we had seen a faint light burning when we stood without.

I trod as gently as my clumsy shoes would permit me into the room and saw a silvery haired lady lying upon a bed, the curtains of which were drawn wide open. She was not very old; trouble, rather than time, had worn her out.

As the doctor led me to her bedside she opened her eyes and fixed upon me a clear, steady look. I bowed, but did not speak.

"You are Geoffrey Heathcote, of Butley Croft?" she said in faint tones.

"I am, madam," I replied.

"I knew your father," she continued, "he was a gallant and worthy gentleman. Oh, I trust you are like him."

I bowed once more. The Doctor bent over the bed. "Have no fear, Mistress Whitgift," he whispered, yet loudly enough for all to hear, "I have known him since he was born. He is a good lad, as good as gold. Fear nothing!"

The dying woman nodded, and turned her eyes on me again.

"You love Enid?" she said.

"Truly and dearly, Mistress Whitgift," I replied. "Truly and dearly."

"And you look forward to marrying her?"

"Such is my great hope," said I.

She made a slight gesture, and Enid, who had fallen back when we approached the bedside, came forward.

"And you would marry him, Enid?"

My love burst up scarlet but said "Yes," softly.

"Then marry now," said the sick woman as eagerly as her strength would permit. "Let me see it, and know it. Marry now. I shall die the easier for it."

There was a dead pause for two or three seconds then I turned to Enid, and she lifted her eyes to mine bravely. I questioned her with a look, and held out my hand. The colour swept like a wave over cheek and throat, and she laid her hand in mine.

"We are ready," I said.

Mrs. Whitgift gave a contented sigh, and Dr. Willingham fluttered over the leaves of his Prayer Book in search of the marriage service. He looked over his spectacles and saw Siani near the door.

"Call in the people of the house," he said; "they are good hearts, true as steel—call them in."

Siani ran at once, and returned in a moment with old William and his wife. Mrs. Whitgift beckoned to the latter with a finger and whispered some directions in her ear. The woman went at once and searched in a tall press at the other end of the room and came back with a small box in her hand.

"Take it, Enid, and wear it for my sake," breathed Mistress Whitgift, faintly.

Enid, whose eyes were now fast dropping tears, opened the box, and saw a valuable ring lying within.

"Ay, the wedding ring," said the Doctor softly, thinking aloud.

"Yes, the wedding ring," whispered Mistress Whitgift.

At a word from Dr. Willingham we knelt before him, and in a low, full, deep voice he began to read the service. A stranger wedding, surely, was never seen; the dimly

lighted chamber of death; a dying woman devouring us with her eyes; a beautiful young bride giving her hand to a groom in clownish homespun, and a priest wrapped in a shabby horseman's coat.

This is as I have seen it since, in looking back upon that memorable evening; not as I saw it then. Ah, no! I had no thoughts for such trifles as the quaint figures we presented; my mind was too strongly bent on the solemn situation in which we stood at the moment.

The rite was ended, and the reverent silence which followed the Doctor's last words was still unbroken, when a sudden, sharp rapping on the door rang through the house. William ran at once, and we heard him hold a muffled colloquy with the person without. Then he returned to the room and beckoned Doctor Willingham with so disturbed and mysterious an air that I felt sure some bad news had arrived.

"What is it?" whispered the sick woman. "Let William come here."

The old man came forward and told his story in low tones.

"'Tis the landlord's wife from the 'Holly Bush,'" said he. "She slipped up, being friendly to us, to give notice that someone has carried word to yonder attorney at the inn that Doctor Willingham was seen hereabouts. And now the attorney is egging on Humphrey Brown, the constable, to come here and search the place."

"The old story, the old story," said the good Doctor, composedly.

"Go, go," said Mistress Whitgift, faintly.

"I have a piece of duty yet to perform which I would leave undone at no cost," replied he; "then it is time to talk of going," and he called for writing materials. He wrote a careful statement testifying to the marriage he had solemnised, and signed it. Next, we put our names to the document, and then Mistress Whitgift, whose earnest wish it was also to attest, was assisted by the clergyman to write her name in trembling characters. William witnessed it also, and the women signed by crosses.

"Now, leave us for a few minutes," said the Doctor, giving the paper to Enid.

We went softly out, and as we passed through the doorway, his quiet, deep voice was heard reading the last prayers.

William went to the door, and I followed him. The old man held up his finger, and we listened earnestly. No sound. He cautiously drew the bolt and peeped out. Everything was quiet, and he stepped out. I went with him, and we trod softly down to the gate which led to the road. The mist was so thick that the lights of the village were blotted out, and heavy, slow drops pattered down from the trees above. We had been watching some five minutes when a muffled trampling of feet echoed along the road.

"They are coming," whispered William, and we ran back to the house. The Doctor himself stood in the doorway.

"Haste, sir," cried William, "there's a party not a hundred yards from the gate."

Dr. Willingham hugged me tight for a moment and whispered: "If the poor lady lasts so long, I'll be here again this time to-morrow night."

And we parted. He went off as composedly as possible by a path leading through a little wood at the back of the house. He had been hunted so often that he minded it no more than an old dog fox who knows of a sure earth within easy reach.

CHAPTER XXVI.

INTRUDERS.

WE went inside at once and made all fast. The women betook themselves to the sick chamber and I settled myself by the fire. In two minutes a knocking came at the door. A parley ensued, and then William bargained to admit the constable and no one else.

"There's no other man got a right in here, and I'll have no noisy crowd trampling about the house, and my mistress on her death-bed," said William.

Humphrey Brown, the constable, agreed to this, and a moment after he walked into the kitchen, a big, broad-faced, good-humoured looking rustic.

"'Tis a thing I never looked for from you, Humphrey," said William, following him, "and my mistress as she is."

"You don't suppose, William, I'm doing this for my own pleasure, do ye?" retorted Humphrey. "There's that lawyer man been threatening me with goodness knows what because I wouldn't up and rush here twenty minutes agone."

"Thanks, good Humphrey," thought I.

"Ha' ye got the old Doctor about, William?" asked the constable in a confidential voice, "and who's yon young man?"

"I'll tell you who are in this house beside ourselves, Humphrey," said William, "and that's the mistress's good daughter, a lady come this day from Wales, and her two servants, and that's one of them."

"Ay, ay," said the other, wagging his head, "one of they poor creatures with never a word but his own outlandish tongue, I suppose. Well, William, I'll look about a bit just to please yon busybody, and say all's clear wi' ye."

They left the kitchen, and I sat and listened eagerly.

Suddenly a sharp wail came from the sick-room. The doors were open, and I caught faintly the cry, "My mistress, my poor mistress!"

"Dead," thought I. "Poor lady, she is gone," and death it proved. I heard William cry out and run to the room, and a moment after the constable trod heavily down the passage to the door. He drew the bolt, and murmured softly to someone without.

"Then I demand admittance," cried a sharp voice. "My precise orders are to take charge of everything instantly upon the decease of Mistress Whitgift. Make way!"

So far as I could learn, no one either disputed the claim or barred the way, and in bounced a small, stout, fussy man, dressed in black, and looking about him on all sides as if he expected to make important discoveries at every glance.

"And whom have we here?" he cried, pointing at me a cane which he carried. "Pray, who are you?"

I made no haste to answer, and the good-natured constable put in a word for me.

"'Tis a servant of the young lady from Wales, Master Johnson," said he, "and has never a word of our language."

This flight on the part of honest Humphrey did me excellent service, and I took care to continue mute.

The attorney paid no more heed to me as a person too insignificant for his notice, and now began to issue shrill orders and browbeat William, who, his face running with tears, had presented himself at command.

As I watched this turn of affairs with an uneasy mind, I saw Enid come in at the door and move swiftly down the room toward me. At sight of her the man of law lifted his head as if to call her to book, as he was doing everyone else, but, luckily both for him and for me, he thought better of it when he saw who she was, and let her pass with nothing more than a broad, insolent stare, for which I would have willingly buffeted him.

That she should come to give some orders to her servant was a thing natural enough, and when I stood up to listen to her, no one paid any further heed to us. We were isolated by the length of the room, and could speak freely in a low voice.

"This is dreadful," whispered Enid. "Oh! take care. If that man should suspect something? What must we do?"

"We can do nothing for the present, dearest," I replied. "It would be best for you to go to your room and keep Siani with you. We will march at early morning."

I looked up and saw the attorney edging towards us.

Digitized by Google

Enid caught the alarm in my eyes, and said no more, but turned, and glided swiftly from the place. Master Johnson rubbed his under lip and stared at her as if meditating some remark, but said nothing till she had vanished through the doorway, and then muttered to himself: "Malignants, rank malignants, I'll warrant ye!" He looked at me as if he would dearly love to put a string of questions, but gave a vexed nod, being fully persuaded of the difficulties in the way, and turned his attention to other matters.

Several persons had followed him from the village; but he now dismissed all these, save one, his personal follower, a big, gaunt, shabby fellow, who seemed his clerk.

In company with this myrmidon, he began to march hither and thither about the house, prying and poking, and asking questions innumerable of old William. How I longed to fling him and his clerk neck and crop into the night, and chafed and chafed because I dared not!

Someone came towards me, and I looked up. It was the old servant.

"Where will you sleep, master?" said he. "The other man, Gwilym, used to sleep on straw in the stable. He liked it best."

"I am very unwilling to leave this house to-night, William," I whispered, "and those fellows about."

"True, sir," he replied; "but the attorney is going back to the inn, and has bidden me find a bed for his man."

"And where?" said I.

"I can do no more than lay him a pallet in the corner of this room."

"Then I stay here also," I returned. "Lay me some oak logs handy to keep the fire going, and this elbow chair will serve my turn handsomely; and, William, ask your wife to bid them be stirring by the first peep of dawn."

"You do well to say that, sir," rejoined the old man. "That attorney means some mischief. I heard him say to his man——"

What the attorney said I never knew, for at that moment he bustled into the kitchen, and William busied himself in mending the fire. I had seated myself in the big, comfortable elbow-chair, and I drew my hat over my eyes and feigned sleep.

"You outlandish fellow lacks not impudence," puffed Master Johnson, "to seat himself in the snuggest chair in the presence of his betters. Turn him out at once!"

"Turn him out yourself," said William, sourly. "I want no Welsh knife between my ribs."

"Knife, knife," cried Master Johnson. "What do you mean?"

"Pull him out of the chair," growled William, "and you'll find out. They are quick as fire, and savage as tigers."

"Weak, timorous fellow," said the attorney, pompously, but for all that he touched not my collar himself, and, ere long, took his departure. For some time again there was coming and going in the house, several women of the village being busy in the chamber of death, but at last the house sank into silence.

I woke from an uneasy slumber upon feeling myself slightly shook by the shoulder. I opened my eyes, and saw that William was bending over me with a dim lantern in his hand. The fire was dead, and the place was full of the raw chill which precedes the dawn. I shivered, and sat up in the chair.

"It wants half-an-hour to daybreak; better be moving," whispered William.

I thanked him for his kindness in calling me, and slipped toff my shoes. We passed noiselessly by the pallet on which he lawyer's clerk snored, left the house, and crossed to the stable. William hung his lantern on a nail and we began to harness the horses. While I finished strapping and buckling he went away, but soon returned with some food and I ate quickly.

"Are they ready?" I asked.

"They are doing the same as you," said William, "and will be ready when you are."

I stepped outside and looked about me as I ate. The trees shivered in the morning breeze, and faint grey streaks barred the east. At sight of that I made a speedy end of my breakfast and led out the horses towards the gate. A bunch of figures followed me in an instant from the house, and I took Enid for an instant in my arms, kissed her, and swung her up to her saddle. Siani was up at a bound, and I shook William by the hand and gave him a piece of gold. I would willingly have given him more, but, as it was, my purse went back to my pocket without a clink, and he wished us good luck and held the gate open.

"Which way?" asked Enid.

"Back again," I whispered, and she turned Whitesock's head from the village and away we rode towards Ludlow.

CHAPTER XXVII.

To Butley Croft.

When we were clear of the outlying cottages I trotted alongside Enid and, to tell all the truth, held her hand as I talked with her.

"Where are we going?" she asked, her lovely face bent towards mine, as she sat high above me on Whitesock.

"To Butley Croft," I answered.

"To Butley Croft?" she cried, her dark eyes opening great and round. "You? To Butley Croft?"

"I believe I shall be safe," I answered, and told the story of my encounter with Doctor Willingham.

"Now," I went on, "Roger Thorne and his wife will be there, for a surety, and you will be safe with them, and I, I'll make myself useful about the place, as a handy serving-man should."

"Oh, dare you trust your disguise?"

"I am carrying it to the last place where it will be suspected. The hare who returns to her form is often the best hidden."

"But so many there will know you."

"I fear nothing but my voice," I answered. "That is, above everything, the most difficult for me to conceal. I would I could act as if I were dumb."

"And you shall be as good," cried Enid. "Play your part right out, Geoffrey. You are dressed as a Welshman from the hills. Act as one. You have but to learn two words—'*Dim Saesneg.*' Shake your head clumsily and say: '*Dim Saesneg,*' 'no English.'"

I looked up into her eager face and shining eyes, and was delighted with the completeness of this finishing touch.

"Enid, dearest," I said, "you have hit on an excellent device. Everything plays to it. Come, give me the words."

I had them in two minutes. During my stay at Nant-y-Bryn I had picked up a few words and common phrases, though I could neither make up nor understand a sentence of any length, and what I knew I now rehearsed. Enid and Siani seconded my efforts with great delight, and proceeded to teach me to recite—parrot fashion—several mysterious-sounding sentences full of gutturals. Not that they expected to communicate with me in their own language, but in order that I might be able to say something to them in the presence of strangers, and so give a better colour to my assumed character. For this purpose it mattered not what gibberish I uttered, since the Welsh tongue was utterly unknown about Butley Croft.

As for the guttural, I could rasp it out a little already, and now rapidly improved under the earnest drilling I received. A village came in sight, and I sank back to my place beside the led pony.

Columns of blue wood smoke were curling above the deep-thatched roofs as we rode through the place, the clink of the hammer at the forge told that the labours of the day had begun, and peasants were moving to the fields. For

two or three miles further the roadside was dotted with cottages, and we marched in formal order.

The beauty of the morning sank deeply into my heart. On the high stations of the hills, the spring had been cold, and stern, and backward; here, it was at its loveliest. The air was soft, and sweet, and scented; the meadows full of cowslips; the blackbird in the copse fluted his rich, mellow, careless notes; the lark, hidden in the high radiance of the dawn, poured a rain of joyous song, and the fragrant, blooming, well-ordered English countryside delighted my eyes as those of a man returned from exile.

Half way to Ludlow we turned our horses' heads to the left and rode south, but easily and loiteringly, for we had time and to spare for our day's journey. At midday we made a long halt at a solitary inn, and here I changed my last Jacobus.

There is no room for moneyless people in the wide world, and the simple truth was that I had no other resource at hand than to head for Butley Croft.

The afternoon was spent in moving at a foot pace through the mild, sweet spring sunshine by solitary bridle tracks and over wide, lonely heaths steeped in the delicious beady fragrance of the gorse, for now I knew every yard of the country, and was aiming to come to our destination by unfrequented roads, since I could not say for a certainty what reception lay before us, and wished to feel my way carefully into the place.

It wanted an hour to sundown, and we were four miles to the west of my house, crossing an undulating, furzy common. We were marching very slowly along a broad, grassy ride, when I became aware of a horseman coming rapidly up behind us.

Luckily, I had been for a long time riding in my proper station, lest we might be observed, so we had no dispositions to alter. I stared over my shoulder, and my uneasiness vanished at a glance.

"As I live," I cried, "here comes Roger Thorne, my steward."

"You will be all right, won't you?" cried Enid. "You do not fear him?"

"Fear him!" I laughed. "No more than I do my shadow. No more than I do you, and what can I say more? But soft. Ride steadily on and let us see how he will take us?"

I had no time to say more, for Roger's strong chestnut hackney was coming on at a round trot, and was soon at our heels. My stirrup leathers were drawn short on purpose, and my knees stuck up; my hat was over my eyes, I rounded and humped my shoulders, and sat the grey pony with the true slouch of a lazy groom.

As I glanced over our party I felt that we played our parts to perfection; I and the led-pony in the rear; Enid in front, looking a princess in her handsome riding-habit, and sitting Whitesock like a picture, her waiting-maid riding at her side, and a little behind.

"Roger will canter by, and I will hallo after him," thinking, in my foolishness, of myself alone.

On he came, a small, bright-eyed man of sixty, perched on his big hackney and eyeing me over with keen glance as he rode up on my left hand. I stared at him from under the broad brim of my hat and tugged it respectfully. He slightly lifted his bridle hand in return, and I kept my face straight with much ado.

The truth is, I could have hugged him. His quiet, pleasant face, and clear, brown eyes were delightful to see again, and home was in every line of him. A couple of strides carried him level with Enid, and he jumped in his saddle. Two strides again and he swung his hackney clear across the path and pulled him up dead, blocking our way.

"Stand," shouted Roger, "but fear nought. I am a true man, and I demand speech with you."

He looked round with flushed face and bright eyes, staring eagerly at Enid. She had drawn rein at once, and

Eiffel Tower

It is by concentrating the Lemons in the orchards where they are grown that the Eiffel Tower Lemonade can be supplied at this remarkable price. A 4½d. Bottle of Eiffel Tower Lemonade makes 32 Tumblers (2 Gallons) of most delicious Home-made Lemonade. It is made from the finest Lemons only that the world produces. None genuine unless bearing the Eiffel Tower Trade Mark.

Lemonade

Be sure that you get Eiffel Tower Lemonade when you ask for it, as its great success has brought out inferior imitations that only cause disappointment.

If you cannot get it from your Grocer, send 4½d. to the makers, G. Foster Clark & Co., 115 Eiffel Tower Factory, Maidstone, they will send you a bottle post free by return.

A second bottle will not be supplied by the firm, but must be obtained of Grocers, Chemists, or Stores.

2 Gallons for 4½d.

The firm have adopted the following novel method to induce everybody to try their Lemonade. The first fifty letters opened every day not only have the Lemonade sent by return post, but the stamps are also returned to the fortunate applicants. In this way—

300 BOTTLES ARE GIVEN AWAY WEEKLY.

sat looking at him. The sweetness and beauty of her smile disarmed him, and he took off his hat.

"Madam," said Roger, bowing politely, "where got you that mare you ride on?"

"Pray, why do you stop our road?" asked Enid.

"For sheer wonder," replied Roger. "I see the creature that has never carried but one man in all her life—and that man my dear young master—in the company of strangers, and I must know how you got her."

"How come you to be so sure of her?" I demanded in a false voice, pushing my pony forward. Roger dropped his hand into a pocket where he had a pistol.

"Madam," he urged, "bid your man keep back. He looks a strong rogue and a masterful. I would do him no harm, but know the truth of this matter I will and must. You are a lady and kind. My own eyes are warrant enough for that. Tell me, I pray of you. And, as for me knowing the mare, why, look you, she knows me. Whitesock! Good lass. Whitesock, then! Where, where is he who rode her from these parts? From whom had you the mare, madam?"

"From her husband," I croaked.

A lovely, rosy flush shone all over Enid's face, and her eyes, brightened by Roger's appeal, were turned shyly upon me. Roger stared from one to the other with parted lips. A lady and her serving man upon these terms had he never seen before.

"And tell me, good fellow, the name of your mistress's husband?"

"Geoffrey Heathcote, of Butley Croft."

I have never seen, and never shall see again, such a picture as Roger's face presented upon hearing these familiar, yet totally unexpected words.

"My young master," he gasped.

"Oh, Geoffrey," pleaded Enid.

I drew my hat right down upon my face, then lower and lower, till my forehead, and laughing eyes were to be seen, and "Roger Thorne," said I, in my own voice.

He knew me then. He flung himself from his horse, ran to the side of my pony, and fairly held me in his arms.

"Oh, Master Geoffrey," he cried, "Praise God I see you safe and well once more. And praise God I never knew you, for your enemies will be in like case. But keep your hat well pulled down. I knew you without it, at once."

I shook his honest hand, and presented him to Enid.

"Here, Roger," said I, "is your mistress. Not even you must question her right to ride Whitesock."

"Ah, sir, you know what I meant," said he, and, with as much ceremony as if Enid and I were arriving at the house of my fathers in a coach and six, he advanced to pay his respects and kiss her hand.

Then Roger unfolded his budget of news which, in short, came to this. Sir John Postgate, attended by a strong posse, had descended on Butley Croft within six hours of my flight; but the secret of my going had been well kept, and he discovered nothing to my disadvantage.

Since then there had been much riding to and fro, and, for a while, troops had been quartered on the place. These were now gone, luckily, and the house was under the authority of the independent magistrate. He had largely removed my servants, and garrisoned the place with some of his own people, and a sharp watch was kept on all who came and went.

"We have but one weak place," said I, "Whitesock. It is for her sake that I am skulking across the common here instead of riding up Butley Street as would be the safer way of approach."

"That it would," replied Roger. "To come secretly is to set tongues wagging with a will. And there is no need for you to do so now. I will take Whitesock to Ralph's cottage in the chase, where she can be safely hidden, and do you, sir, and your party take a cast round, and ride up the street boldly."

"Ay, ay, Roger," said I, "a good plan, and the meeting with you has been lucky, indeed."

The cottage of Ralph, the keeper, lay in a secluded spot on the side furthest from the village and avenue, and far from any other house. No one lived there but himself and his wife, and their fidelity was assured.

"Old Ranger is there, too," remarked Thorne, "and that will help to keep off the people who might carry tales, for he flew out at Sir John's folk time and again, as if he well knew they were enemies; and I had to banish him, or else suffer him to be killed, and that I was unwilling to see."

Ranger was a staunch bloodhound who had watched the house by night, and I knew well his keen dislike of strangers. While Roger was talking we had been busily shifting the saddles, and I now put him in possession of the part I intended to play.

In a few minutes all was ready, and we parted, Roger riding northwards towards Ralph's cottage, while we struck across the common to the south to reach the main road well out of sight of the village. Enid was now mounted on her grey pony, and I marched on foot. Roger had carried off my sword, too, for our journey's end was in sight, and it was hardly the weapon to swing at the waist of a serving man who was about to be scrutinised by unfriendly eyes. The dusk was falling as we went up the village street, and lights were shining in familiar windows on either hand. Several people ran out to stare at us, and Adam Bell, the landlord of the village inn, peered eagerly to see if we were likely customers. But we pushed on, and turned in at the gates of the long avenue which led up to the house.

When we came to the front of the latter, I beat a lusty tattoo on the great door, and Roger came himself to open it. He received us with an excellent affectation of wonder, for one or two faces, strange to me, could be seen at the further end of the wide hall; parleyed with Enid a short time, then conducted her to the oak parlour, where a fire happened to be burning. He gave orders that I should be led to the stables, and a groom came with me. The beasts were put up, and then I followed the man to the kitchen, where of some five or six servants assembled I knew but one, an old woman, partial blind and deaf. I had need here of my catch-word at once, for an instant volley of questions was poured on me by the inquisitive crowd.

"*Dim Saesneg*," I muttered, and shook my head with a vacant stare. This brought them to a stand, and they were none so pleased, either. For the next few minutes I was the butt of more uncomplimentary speeches than I had ever heard before in my life, but I bore them with a face of uncomprehending serenity, and presently the entrance of Roger secured me better treatment. Food was offered to me, and I ate and drank, then sat in an unnoticed corner in a dozing attitude, until Roger bade me by signs—whereat there was much merriment—to follow him, and he assigned me, with excellent judgment, a cheerless garret as a sleeping apartment.

(*To be continued.*)

Digitized by Google

PYN-KA

THE WONDERFUL
METAL POLISHER

The Lustre Lasts!
Pyn-Ka Leaves no Scratches!

Cleans and burnishes gold, silver, plate, copper, brass, nickel, tin, glass, etc., better, quicker, and at less cost of labour and money than any other polish known.

Paste or tablets, 1d. to 6d. All dealers.

£20

Hairdressers fitted up Estimates Free.

Tobacconists Commencing. See Illustrated Guide (239 pages), 3d. How to open a cigar store, £20 to £2,000. Tobacconists Outfitting Company, 186 Euston Road, London.

The largest and original house (50 years' reputation). Mgr., H. Myers.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (1s. 6d.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **16 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "I pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness: it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Walmsley Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Palatable Substitute for Cod Liver Oil.

Devonshire Cream

(REALLY GENUINE.)
In Patent Air-tight Tins.

Quarter Pound **10d.**
Half Pound... **1s. 4d.**
One Pound ... **2s. 4d.**
(including Tin and Postage).

MRS. CONYERS,
Morchard Bishop, Devon.

GOOD!

IT'S MASON'S EXTRACT OF HERBS.

A 6d. BOTTLE makes
8 GALLONS
PRIME NON-INTOXICATING BEER
WHOLESOME.
PREPARED from ENGLISH HERBS

Sample Bottle Free 9 Stamps, 2 for 15 Stamps.

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

ENORMOUS
PRIZE SCHEME
For JULY and OCTOBER, 1899.

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER.

16,000 Handsome PRIZES, value **£8,898 4s.**

LIST OF PRIZES.

1	Cash Prize of £100	£100 0 0
2	Cash Prizes of £50 each	100 0 0
5	Pianos, value £40 each	200 0 0
4	Cash Prizes of £25 each	100 0 0
5	Cash Prizes of £20 each	100 0 0
10	Organs, value £20 each	200 0 0
10	Cash Prizes of £10 each	100 0 0
40	Sewing Machines, value £8 each	320 0 0
40	Cash Prizes of £5 each	200 0 0
150	Cash Prizes of £2 each	300 0 0
300	Cash Prizes of £1 each	300 0 0
600	Gents' Umbrellas, value 15/- each	450 0 0
600	Ladies' Umbrellas, value 15/- each	450 0 0
600	Cash Prizes, value 10/- each	300 0 0
300	Ladies' Umbrellas, value 7/6 each	112 10 0
1,000	Cash Prizes of 5/- each	250 0 0
2,000	Boxes of our famous "Nubolic Soap," packed in fancy boxes, containing 18 12-oz. Tablets value 4/- per box ...	400 0 0
2,333	Pictures of the famous 'Charge of the Light Brigade," in gilt frame, value 4/- each	466 12 0
8,000	Each Competition. Each Competition	**4,449 2 0**

☞ **Do not be afraid of sending in your Wrappers, however small your collection, as in our Prize Competitions of January and February every competitor secured a Prize: and in the March Competition nearly every competitor was successful.**

CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

Cut off the top portion of Wrapper, with the words **Watson's Matchless Cleanser**, and send, postage or carriage paid, to **Joseph Watson & Sons Limited, Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds**, not later than *July 31st or October 31st*. Many parcels arrive, postage or carriage not being fully paid, such parcel will be refused. Be careful to see that the postage is paid. The prizes will be awarded in the above order to the senders of the highest numbers of Wrappers. Each parcel sent in must contain the full name and address of sender, and the number of Wrappers sent must be marked on the same paper. A list, giving result of competition, will be enclosed with each prize when it is sent out. The decision of J. Watson & Sons, Limited, to be final. Every Wrapper must have first contained soap. No employée of Joseph Watson & Sons, Limited, will be eligible.

Watson's Matchless Cleanser has the Largest Sale of full weight 1-lb. Tablets in the World; Sold by all Grocers, Oilmen, &c.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

SUCH AS

Sick Headache, Constipation, Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver & Female Ailments.

SALE NOW OVER SIX MILLIONS YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d., and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

Digitized by Google

THE POOR RELATION'S SHARE.

WELL, now! What is all that talk about lotteries being all humbug—all that talk about their having no drawing and no winning numbers?

On the contrary, they are an undisputable reality. So much so that it has become impossible to exchange a few words with a friend on the Boulevard on account of the number of people loudly shouting: "Here's the official list of the winning numbers of the X. lottery."

For—and this is remarkable—since lotteries have been forbidden in France there is a new one every morning.

Well and good. But do they have winning numbers? That's the capital point. Do they have winning numbers? Why, I saw one myself—and it is a very pretty thing to look at!

My neighbour had it. Therefore he won. Better than that; he drew his money. Not the capital prize, but ten thousand francs. That was a nice little amount to win, was it not?

Besides, he deserves it. He is a very nice fellow, generous, recently married to a beautiful young lady who brought him a large dowry just at the time when he was getting to the end of his string. He is a lucky dog, but an excellent fellow.

Having cashed and pocketed the amount, having spread it out under his wife's eyes, he said to her: "Listen; it's a regular windfall. We don't need it; so, if you are willing, we'll have a good time."

"Oh! yes!" said she, artlessly.

"Well, take your choice. What's it to be; the seaside or a trip to the mountains?"

The young woman, who is sensible, earnestly weighed the pros and cons, and decided upon both.

This reasoning was to my neighbour's taste. There was not a moment to be lost.

"By the way," said he, as he was going out, "I met cousin Falengois. Really, poor Falengois has no luck. He is always overwhelmed on the eve of concluding transactions which never amount to anything. But what courage he has! It was not enough for him to take care of his crippled father-in-law. His sister was left a widow, without resources and with two children. Would you believe, my dear, that he took them into his home?"

"Poor cousin!" she said with emotion.

"Let us see," he continued. "Suppose we should lay aside a part of what we have so unexpectedly received for the benefit of the poor? What do you think of giving them a thousand francs?"

The young woman appeared moved.

"Ah!" she said, "that's right! That's just like you! Ah! how I love you! How kind you are!"

"It's settled then," replied the young man. "Go to your dressmaker, and, after I am through with my errands, I'll go up to Falengois."

"It will bring us luck!" she said as a conclusion.

They met again at lunch. With all the good humour they felt at having performed a kind act, they exchanged notes about what they had hastily done during the forenoon. He would see what unique material she had chosen for her dresses.

"But, by the way!" inquired she; "what about Falengois?"

"It was impossible for me to go that far, my dear. I would have kept you waiting for lunch. But as soon as I have taken my coffee I'll leave my orders at the shoemaker and run up to Falengois." After a few moments of reflection the young man added: "Besides, I thought about something."

"What is it, love?"

"You know how he is; an excellent fellow, but so thoughtless, so weak-minded! Seeing himself suddenly with a thousand francs at his disposal, will he have the prudence, the strength of mind to use it wisely? In his interest, and on that account only, would it not be better to give him the amount in two instalments? You know how he is, love."

"You are right," replied the young woman. "In his kindness he would be capable of using the greater part of it for the benefit of those whom he supports. That's foolishness. We must guard against his weakness. If I were in your place, I would say to him: 'Here are two hundred and fifty francs, and——"

"And next month—you are right."

"Do not say: 'next month.' Do not say anything at all. Then, as he will not expect anything more, he will save what he has."

"Quite so! On leaving the shoemaker I'll run straight to Falengois. You may be sure of that."

* * * * *

"Did you go there?" she asked when, toward three o'clock in the afternoon, her husband came back, loaded with bundles.

"No," said he; "I did not have money enough about me after my purchases. You see, we were forgetting the principal thing."

"What is that?"

"A lunch box for our travels. Look at this."

And he showed her an ebony box, full of ingenious compartments. How beautiful it was! More than that, indispensable. One has not always time to leave the train to go to the buffet. This lunch box would allow them to satisfy their hunger. It was a good idea. Only, the price was rather steep.

A red-letter day it was for them. Having begun so auspiciously, it could not end in a commonplace way.

"Do you know," said the young husband; "we'll go and have dinner at some restaurant."

"All right."

"Let's keep out of the crowd. We'll take a carriage, we'll have a nice little dinner, and in the evening we'll stroll through the woods. We'll have to get ready—it's getting late!"

"Goodness gracious!" said she: "we are forgetting Falengois!"

"The dickens! That's so! For the present I'll send him a hundred francs, with a short note."

"No. It would hurt his feelings. Go yourself, my dear. It is such a delicate matter."

"Well! I'll take a cab to get through quicker. I will not delay, I assure you."

* * * * *

Three-quarters of an hour later the young man came back, looking very serious.

"You saw him?" asked madame.

"Yes!" said he with a sigh. "I am awfully sorry. It's worse than I thought. The sheriff is after him now."

"And?"

"What could I do? I thought: a hundred francs will not get him out of trouble."

"Of course not—poor fellow!"

"Then——"

"Naturally!"

"He'll do the best he can."

"Hope so! But how hard it is to help anyone!"

"Let's go to dinner."

E. CADOL.

Digitized by Google

Save that Dress!

Silk, Satin, Cotton or Wool, dye equally as well with that modern Home Dye, Maypole Soap.

Easy to use—fast and brilliant in the colour or shade you want.

"Quality counts"—save the old dress.

DYE IT AT HOME.

Maypole Soap doesn't leave the material washed out and streaky looking—it dyes evenly, every single time. We guarantee you can't fail if you follow the simple directions. Sold everywhere, in all colours.

Maypole Soap

DYES ANY COLOUR.

Write for Free Booklet "The Perfection of Home Dyeing," or we give free advice on Home Dyeing cheerfully by letter.—

THE MAYPOLE SOAP CO., Ltd., 98 & 99, High Holborn, London W.C.

SAVE HALF YOUR BUTCHERS' BILLS and BUY from our DIRECT SUPPLY STORES. Orders of 4s. free delivered. Terms cash on delivery. Orders posted before five p.m. delivered next day everywhere.
MUTTON.—Loins and saddles, 6½d.; shoulders, 6d.
MUTTON.—Legs, 8d.; necks, 5d.
LAMB.—Hind-quarters (9lb.), 8½d.; fore-quarters (9lb.), 7d.
BEEF.—Topside, 7d.; silverside, 7d.; sirloin and ribs, 8½d.
BEEF.—Suet, 4d.; gravy beef, 4d.; brisket, 5d.
BEEF.—Rumps steak, 11½d.; beefsteak, 8½.; salt silverside, 7d.
VEAL and PORK. Equally low prices.
The DIRECT SUPPLY STORES, 6 Holborn Circus, London, E.C.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, or Varicose Veins, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free.

S. S. MURRAY,
7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

SULPHOLINE LOTION,

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

THE "VARIETY" CAMERA.
A GUINEA CAMERA FOR 3s.
Will take photographs 4½ by 3¼. Good enough for an expert or a beginner. Be up-to-date and buy one. Every camera guaranteed. Our Catalogue of Cameras and Novelties, 1d.
VARIETY CO., Dept. J, Dalston, London N.E.

100 PACKETS showy Flower Seeds, 1/6; unequalled anywhere.
DANIEL STONE, LOUDWATER, BUCKS.

3/9 DRESS SKIRTS. Lined linenette. Serge Cloth, Black, Navy, Fawn, Light and Dark Grey; also Purple, Brown, Bronze, and Green Heather Mixtures. All sizes. Postage 5d. extra. Satisfaction guaranteed.

16/- THE NEW COAT AND SKIRT made to measure in fine Venetian Twil, lined throughout, fit guaranteed, smart tailor finish. Send for illustrations and patterns of newest goods.
JAS. MURGATROYD & CO., Grove Terrace, BRADFORD.

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.

Works by hand or treadle. Guaranteed 4 years. Equal in quality and size to any machine. To ensure satisfaction, we will send machine on receipt of 5/- P.O. for ONE MONTH'S TRIAL. Balance can be paid 5/- Monthly. Call or write for designs and Samples of work. 39/-
THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.,
188B High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.,
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

FOR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

JUNO CYCLES

ARE THE VERY BEST AND MOST UP-TO-DATE.
Carriage Paid. Discount for Cash.
Write for New Season's List.
JUNO Cycles and Accessories over 100 pages, sent Post Free.
LISTS POST FREE

Juno No. 4, £10 10s. 17/6 monthly

Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
£10 ... 16/8	£12 ... 20/-	£14 14s. ... 24/6
£10 10s. ... 17/6	£12 12s. ... 21/-	£15 15s. ... 26/3

METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS' CO. Ltd.,
Juno Cycle School & Works, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Street, Without, E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

Typewriters, £9 9s. 15s. 9d. Monthly.

MARVELLOUS VALUE.

Long remnants of Superior, Pure, Heavy White and Grey Calicoes, Flannelettes for Blousings and underclothing; Prints, Piques, Fancy Blousings, &c. Guaranteed no rub ish. Money returned if not satisfied. Assorted parcels or made up as ordered. 12 yds. 3/3, or 24 yds. 5/9. Carriage paid to any part.
THE EMDEN MANUFACTURING CO.,
167 Princess Street, Manchester.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:
Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,
63 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON. W.C.

ZOX

CURES

NEURALGIA

Toothache, Headache, Sciatica, and all Nerve Pains.

PURE, HARMLESS, AND NON-APERIENT.

Do not be persuaded to take a substitute, there is nothing as good as ZOX.

Of all Chemists, 1s. and 2s. 6d. per Box.

ZOX Co., 11 HATTON GARDEN, E.C.

KEATING'S POWDER

DESTROYS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3D 6D & 1S

PIANOS. UPRIGHT IRON GRAND.

Complete Iron frame, Brass Pin Plate, Nickel-bolted Wrest Plank, Check Action, Full Trichord, Full Compass, Rivetted Hammers, Handsome Walnut Case, Inlaid Marqueterie Panel, Sconces, Trusses, etc. Tone and touch perfect. Guaranteed 25 years. 28 guineas, at 10/6 per month. Delivered free on payment of 10/6. Approval. Catalogues Free.

ORGANS. CENUINE AMERICAN.

Imported Direct. Solid Walnut Case, Mirror Top, Music Case, 2 Knee Swells, Mouse and Dust Proof, 8 Stops, 3 Sets of Reeds, 14 Guineas, at 6/- per month. 10 Stops, 3 Sets of Reeds, 2 Octave Couplers. 15 guineas, at 7/- per month. Illustrated Lists Free. Kindly mention this paper.

THE LONDON AND LIVERPOOL PIANOFORTE CO.,
Granby St. & Selborne St., LIVERPOOL.
Agents wanted where not represented.

THE ELECTROPATHIC BELT

CONSTIPATION.

Rev. D. Sutcliffe, Vicar of Holme, Burnley, Lancashire, writes:—"*My health has improved very satisfactorily, and I am now entirely free from the constipation I used to suffer from so severely.*"

Speedily cures all Disorders of the Nerves, Stomach, Liver, and Kidneys. Thousands of Testimonials. Pamphlet & Advice free on application to Medical Battery Co., Ltd.

489, OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.
Call to-day, or write at once.

Digitized by Google

YOUR ESTEEMED INQUIRY DULY TO HAND.

H. E.—Petersburg, Budapesth, and Madrid are the most unhealthy capitals in Europe. But the authorities of the last named city are now determined upon sanitary reform. A series of measures have just been decided upon, whereby sewers are to be constructed, cloths and rags disinfected, food stuffs inspected, hospitals organised, streets watered, etc. It is not before time, because from 1880 to 1887, the Madrid death-rate was 41·2 per 1,000. Since that time it has risen to 45.

OIL.—From the time the first oil well was drilled in America, in 1859, the value of the oil exported by the States is estimated to have reached the enormous figure of £300,000,000. Russia and Turkey are deriving great profits from the industry. Batoum, a miserable Turkish town, has developed in a few years into a powerful and prosperous mercantile community, exporting to India alone last year 17,000,000 gallons of petroleum, of which a million gallons went to Burmah.

SILK.—When first known to the Romans, silk was so dear that it was sold weight for weight with gold.

A. M.—Swallows take their food from the air, and they drink when flying. This, so far as is known to naturalists, cannot be said of any other bird. Various species of gnats and ephemera constitute the food of swallows upon their arrival in this country; but, as summer advances, winged beetles are also greedily taken. So rapidly does the bird capture these that, after it has been on the wing but a few moments, it has accumulated sufficient to form a pellet as large as an ordinary rifle-bullet.

J. B.—Nine million eels are annually consumed in London.

T. T.—Judges' wigs do not seem to have any other origin than the idea that they add to the dignity of their wearers. The effect that a full wig has in this direction is wonderful. Several gentlemen who on the bench strike awe into the breast of the flippant witness present the most commonplace appearance in ordinary life.

BAD.—When a Zulu child is first born it is of a light hue and does not get the darker tint of the parents for some years. As soon as it enters the world the "medicine man" is sent for. Contrary to the custom of the civilised "medicine man," he takes no notice whatever of the mother, but, devoting himself entirely to the child, makes a number of small gashes in various parts of the poor infant's body, into which he rubs medicine and goes on his way rejoicing, returning next day to make the incisions deeper and rub more medicine into them. This second operation being performed, the child is washed and dried by being moved about in the smoke of a wood fire, eventually being daubed all over with a red paint, which is renewed as fast as it wears off for a period of several months.

FANNY.—Over ten million fans are exported in one year from Canton, China.

FEET.—About three-fourths of the women of the world go barefooted, and some of the prettiest that you find anywhere are those of India and the far East. The Chinese women naturally have a pretty foot, were it not for the custom of compressing it to make it smaller than it is. The Manchu women of North China do not compress the feet, and no woman with a compressed foot is allowed in the Royal Palace.

TOMMY.—The chances of a violent death are fewer than you think. Only nine per cent. of those engaged in war are killed on the field of battle.

TALL.—An investigation was made in Switzerland a little while ago concerning the height of men in the various classes of society. The results show that on an average the students are the tallest men. Next to them come the engineers, architects, and contractors. The shortest individuals in the Republic are the tailors and employés in factories. The brewers' ample chests are more developed than those of any other class. Next to them come the masons, the butchers, and the bakers. The size of the arms corresponds, as a rule, with the development of the thorax, but, strange to say, lawyers have broad chests and thin arms. With regard to sight, the workman whose occupation is in the open air sees best, while clerks and literary men suffer most from short sight.

MODE.—In Lapland, dress fashions have not changed for 1,000 years. Fashion papers have no circulation in that country.

W.—The mechanical power of the blow from the tail of a large Greenland whale has been found to be equivalent to 145 horse-power. The width of the tail between the tips of the flanges is about twenty feet. A whale can move through the water at the rate of eight or nine knots an hour.

J. A.—If "cleanliness is next to godliness," the Japanese ought to rank very high in the moral scale, for there is no people so generally given to bathing. The number of bath-houses in Tokio is 1,200, and the average daily attendance at each is 700.

FLORA.—Florists and horticulturists have solved the problem of producing new shades of flowers in a peculiarly "scientific" manner. Instead of growing new varieties of roses, which is a process of years, they simply grow ordinary white roses and dip them in a chemical solution which, in a single hour, converts them into the most magnificent yellow tea-roses, the rare scarlet red, or the peculiar shade of bluish violet which was one of the favourites of last season. In a similar way pink roses are turned into blossoms of the deepest red.

C. C.—Nearly £70,000 has been spent in destroying locusts during the British occupation of Cyprus.

E. M.—You will find that life is extremely simple among the peasants of Roumania. The principal dish at every meal is the maize-cake. With great composure each person in his turn stretches out his right hand, and breaks off a small portion for himself. Besides this, each takes a couple of onions, a small bowl of beans, a slice of water-melon, a few unripe plums, and a draught of water. And to this frugal meal is bidden the labourer or the wayfarer, who may look as though he had no dinner. "Come—I have two onions; here is one for you." Roumanian hospitality has no limits. "I have not even a bite left for a guest," is the bitterest complaint of the poor housewife.

LOYAL.—Of all the Queen's subjects, the Norfolk islander seems to be the most loyal. The uniform question put to the stranger on landing is, "How do you do, sir? How is her Majesty?"

SHORT STORIES' ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double ,, ,,	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page ,, ,, ...	5 0 0
Quarter-page ,, ,, ...	2 10 0
Eighth-page ,, ,, ...	1 5 0
Front page, whole ,, ,, ...	12 10 0
,, half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, June 6th, if intended for the Issue on sale June 20th, and dated June 24th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

AN INSPIRING STORY.

FRAIL as the human body seems to be it is a hard thing to kill. Men have lived with iron rods driven through the brain; they have lived with musket balls in various parts of their anatomy; they have been caught up by tornadoes and landed safe miles away; they have passed through almost incredible hardships and privations, and come out with lots of vitality left; they have been pronounced dead by doctors and undertakers and emerged from their coffins to work and laugh for many a year afterwards; they have (but not often) been hustled through the terrible Whirlpool Rapids of Niagara, and survived to tell of it; and as for diseases, they will outweather nearly anything named in the medical dictionaries, if they have the ghost of a show. I read of a man who successfully defended his log cabin against a whole band of savages. Only he had the women of his family to load his guns and hand them to him.

That's where it is. Nature will make no end of a plucky fight for life if only she gets a bit of help when she is short-handed and rather too hard pushed. But the help must be of the proper sort and intelligently rendered. And, sorry and sad to say! that is the kind of help so rare in the world, and generally so slow to turn up when we are laying on for all we are worth, with our back against a tree.

For instance, when our good friend, Mr. Francis Craig, had got so weak he couldn't put on his clothes, and so thin you could place an egg in each of the hollows behind his ears, it was high time for some friendly forces to rally to his aid.

"In March, 1879," he says, "whilst living at Ballinacourty, Dungarvan, I began to lose strength. I was weak, weary, and dejected, having no life or energy. My appetite was poor, and food gave me no nourishment; but on the other hand tended to irritate my stomach. My breathing was difficult, and often I had fairly to fight for my breath. My skin was very sallow, and often the whites of my eyes were yellow, as in jaundice. I was soon exhausted, and dreadfully weak; but I kept up as well as I could for a time.

"I expectorated a great deal, straining to bring up the phlegm, which was frequently streaked with blood. I was constantly spitting up a frothy fluid, and a short cough troubled me night and day. Cold, clammy sweats broke over my body, leaving me prostrate. The breathing got worse every month, and at length I could not lie in bed, but had to be propped up; *and for two years I sat up in bed.*

"Gradually I wore away to a skeleton, and shrank so much you could have placed an egg in the hollows behind my ears. I was now assisted up and down stairs; and *for three years I was unable to dress myself.* I took only light nourishment and liquid food, and gained no strength from it.

"For four years I went on like this, now better, now worse; and many times was so reduced *I thought my end had come.* I had six doctors attending me, but derived no real benefit from their treatment from first to last.

"In April, 1883, I met a friend who urged me to try Mother Seigel's Syrup. I merely smiled at the suggestion, as I had no faith in its doing me any good. My wife, however persuaded me to take it and got a bottle from Messrs. Brenan & Co., Grattan Square. After taking half a bottle I could eat well and my breathing was easier. I continued with it and gained strength every day.

"In a few weeks to the surprise of all my friends, *I was walking about strong and hearty.* I was soon strong as ever I was in my life, and have since been well. You can publish this statement and refer anyone to me."—(Signed), FRANCIS CRAIG, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, County Waterford, Ireland. September 15th, 1897.

This is an inspiring story; the very thing to cheer and hearten all who have suffered long and much, and are on the verge of giving up the fight. It is nearly enough to make one fancy nobody dies save through ignorance, or non-use of this great remedy. While that is, of course, not the fact, we see how tremendous a victory may be won, even close to the churchyard gate, when the exhausted combatant is reinforced by a medicine of such potency as this one. The disease, although it nearly resembles consumption, was of the digestive organs alone. From it arose the asthma and other functional disturbances described. Mr. Craig is a retired officer of Coast Guards, and is now local Hon. Secretary of the National Lifeboat Institution, and he will pardon me for intimating that Mother Seigel's Syrup was virtually a rescuing lifeboat to him in the struggle he was unavailingly making against wind and sea.

Digitized by Google

THE 'DOLLY' SPECIALITIES

"DOLLY" BLUE.

CAUTION.

Notice.—"DOLLY" Blue is neatly tied in a white bag to a small handle to hold by whilst using. Sold only in Plain White Calico Bags. No blue (whether in bags or not), except that of Messrs. Wm. Edge & Sons Ltd., can be Sold as "Dolly" Blue. "Dolly" Blue is sold by all Grocers and Oilmen at 1d. per bag.

"DOLLY" CREAM AND TINTS.

"DOLLY" Cream Colour, for tinting Curtains, Muslins, Laces, Silks, Blouses, etc., a rich Cream Shade.

"DOLLY" Tints manufactured in six Shades—Pink, Terra-Cotta, Old Gold, Heliotrope, Sea Green, and Canary Yellow—for tinting Faded Ribbons, Lace, etc. Sold everywhere, 1d. per bag. Will wash out when required.

"DOLLY" FAST DYES.

The "DOLLY" Dyes are fast on Wool and Cotton alike, and will not wash out or fade. "Dolly" Dyes are not Tints, but are Solid Colours, viz., Black, Brown, Blue, Green, Red, and Marone, Price 3d. each Dye. "Dolly" Dyes for Home Dyeing are sold by all Grocers and Oilmen.

IMPORTANT.

The Public are cautioned against attempts which may be made to supply other Blue, Tints, and Dyes than those of Messrs. Wm. Edge and Sons Ltd., when "Dolly" Blue, "Dolly" Tints, and "Dolly" Dyes are ordered.

The "DOLLY" SPECIALITIES are Manufactured only by WM. EDGE & SONS Ltd., Bolton, Lancs.

WASHES EVERYTHING

TO BE HAD OF ALL GROCERS &c.

MANUFACTORY: DUKINFIELD, MANCHESTER.

SCRIVEN

HALL'S COCA PELLETS

TRIAL SAMPLES GRATIS.

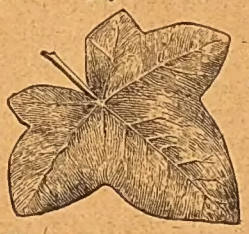
PREVENT FATIGUE from
WALKING,
TRAVELLING
STUDY
CYCLING
SINGING
SICK NURSING
BUSINESS WORRIES
&c., &c.

CURE
SLEEPLESSNESS
BRAIN FAG
NERVOUSNESS
NEURALGIA
DESPONDENCY
EXHAUSTION
MENTAL STRAIN
&c., &c.

SEND POSTCARD FOR A FREE SAMPLE.

PRICES: 1/2, 2/11, 4/9, & 11/3 POST FREE.

SOLE MAKERS:
GILBERT & HALL,
CHEMISTS,
BOURNEMOUTH



The Finest Best Purest

PRICE 3D. PER LARGE DOUBLE TABLET

"Ivy" Soap

ITS REMARKABLE PROPERTY OF FLOATING ON WATER PREVENTS THE ANNOYANCE OF LOSING THE SOAP. AS IT IS ALWAYS IN SIGHT—READY WHEN WANTED.

TO BE HAD OF ALL GROCERS, STORES, ETC.

IF ANY DIFFICULTY, THREE CAKES WILL BE SENT CARRIAGE PAID, ON RECEIPT OF ADDRESS & TWELVE STAMPS OR ONE SHILLING POSTAL ORDER.

BY

IT FLOATS

GOODWINS'
SOLE MAKERS
371 Ordsall Lane,
MANCHESTER.

IT IS NOT

Reckitt's PARIS BLUE

UNLESS RECKITT'S NAME IS ON THE WRAPPER.